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ABSTRACT

A specific dramatic episode in history that allows students to delve into the deeper meanings of selected landmark events and explore a wider context of historical narrative is represented within this supplementary teaching unit. This approach helps students materialize history as an ongoing, open-ended process that is based upon decisions made in the present. The role of women during the Progressive era in the United States (1890 - 1920) is the focus of this unit. Unit topics include: (1) social conditions that led to women's assumption of wider roles in the public arena during the Progressive era; (2) the impact of higher education for African American women and white middle-class women; (3) methods women used to exert influence in the public arena, including the women's club movement, settlement houses, and labor organizations; (4) differences and tensions between middle-class women reformers and their working-class clients; and (5) individuals, organizations, and events that led to popular acceptance of birth control and suffrage. The guide is based on primary sources taken from documents, artifacts, journals, diaries, newspapers, and literature from the period under study. Teacher background materials, lesson plans, and student resources are given to provide an overview of the entire unit, as well as various ideas and approaches for this unit. Contains 15 suggested reading resources. (BT)

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WOMEN

in the

PROGRESSIVE ERA

A Unit of Study for Grades 9-12

by

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NATIONAL CENTER FOR HISTORY IN THE SCHOOLS
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For information on additional teaching units and other resources from the Center, please write:

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APPROACH AND RATIONALE

by Linda Symcox

The National Center for History in the Schools has developed the following collection of lessons for teaching **Women in the Progressive Era**. Our units are the fruit of a year-long collaboration between history professors and experienced teachers of both United States and World History. They represent specific "**dramatic moments**" in history from which you and your students can pause to delve into the deeper meanings of selected landmark events and explore their wider context in the great historical narrative.

In our approach, the continuing narrative provides the context in which the dramatic moment is situated. By studying a crucial turning-point in history, the student becomes aware that choices had to be made by real human beings, that those decisions were the result of specific factors, and that they set in motion a series of historical consequences. We have selected dramatic moments that best bring alive that decision-making process. We hope that through this approach your students will realize that history is an ongoing, open-ended process, and that the decisions they make today create the conditions of tomorrow's history.

Our dramatic moments are based on **primary sources**, taken from documents, artifacts, journals, diaries, newspapers and literature from the period under study. As you know, a primary source is a **first-hand** account of any event in history. For example, the telecast or the script of a speech would be a primary source. A secondary source is a **second-hand** account of an event. This would be, for example, the newspaper account of the speech the next day or a newscaster's report about the speech. All historical accounts, such as textbooks, are by their very nature secondary sources. What we hope to achieve using primary source documents in these lessons is to remove the distance that students feel from historical events and to connect them more intimately with the past. In this way we hope to re-create for your students a sense of "being there," a sense of seeing history through the eyes of the very people who were making decisions. This will help your students develop historical empathy, to realize that history is not an impersonal process divorced from real people like themselves. At the same time, by analyzing primary sources, students will actually practice the historian's craft, discovering for themselves how to analyze evidence, establish a valid interpretation and construct a coherent narrative in which all the relevant factors play a part.

CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION

Within this unit, you will find: 1) **Teacher Background Materials** and 2) **Lesson Plans** with **Student Resources**. This unit, as we have said above, focuses on certain key moments in time and should be used as a supplement to your customary course materials. We have chosen to pitch the various lessons at the 9–12 grade level, but they can usually be adapted to a slightly higher or lower level.

The **Teacher Background** section should provide you with a good overview of the entire unit and with the historical information and context necessary to link the specific **Dramatic Moment** to the larger historical narrative. You may consult it for your own use, and you may choose to share it with students if they are of a sufficient grade level to understand the materials.

The **Lesson Plans** include a variety of ideas and approaches for the teacher which can be elaborated upon or cut as you see the need. These lesson plans contain student resources which accompany each lesson. These resources consist of primary source documents, any handouts or student background materials, and in many cases, a bibliography for the unit.

In our series of teaching units each unit can be taught in several ways. You can teach all of the lessons offered on any given topic, or you can select and adapt the ones that best support your particular course needs. We have not attempted to be comprehensive or prescriptive in our offerings, but rather to give you an array of enticing possibilities for in-depth study, at varying grade levels. We hope that you will find the lesson plans exciting and stimulating for your classes. We also hope that your students will never again see history as a boring sweep of endless facts and meaningless dates but rather as an endless treasure of real life stories, and an exercise in analysis and reconstruction, rather than rote memorization.

WOMAN'S ERROR AND HER DEBT

The most far-reaching social development of modern times is the revolt of woman against sex servitude. The most important force in the remaking of the world is a free motherhood. Besides this force, the elaborate international programmes of modern statesmen are weak and superficial. Diplomats may formulate leagues of nations and nations may pledge their utmost strength to maintain them, statesmen may dream of reconstructing the world out of alliances, hegemonies and spheres of influence, but woman, continuing to produce explosive populations, will convert these pledges into the proverbial scraps of paper; or she may, by controlling birth, lift motherhood to the plane of a voluntary, intelligent function, and remake the world. When the world is thus remade, it will exceed the dream of statesman, reformer, and revolutionist.

Margaret Sanger, Woman and the New Race (New York, Blue Ribbon Books, 1920), p.1.

Margaret Sanger, 1952.

Reprinted courtesy of The Bettman Archives.

I. UNIT OVERVIEW AND RATIONALE

One of the most important (and least appreciated) aspects of industrialization and urbanization in the last quarter of the nineteenth century was the appearance of a new American woman who challenged deeply rooted traditions about the role of women and the family. Women appeared in growing numbers among American wage-earners, in higher education, in the professions and the lively arts, and in politics. As activists and social reformers, women significantly shaped the culture of a period historians have labeled "the Progressive era."

II. UNIT CONTEXT

The history of women from 1890 to 1920 is inextricably tied to the larger framework of the history of the labor movement and social reforms of the Progressive era. This unit should follow the study of the economic and social changes brought on by industrialization, immigration, and the rise of the cities.

III. CORRELATION TO NATIONAL HISTORY STANDARD

"Women in the Progressive Era" provides teaching materials to support the *National Standards for History, Basic Edition* (National Center for History in the Schools, 1996), Era 7, *The Emergence of Modern America (1890-1930)*. Lessons within this unit assist students in attaining Standard 1A by evaluating Progressive attempts at social and moral reform.

This unit likewise integrates a number of Historical Thinking Standards including: reconstruct patters of historical succession and duration in which historical developments have unfolded (Standard 1, Chronological

Thinking); draw upon visual and literacy sources (Standard 2, Historical Comprehension); examine the influence of ideas, consider multiple perspectives (Standard 3, Historical Analysis and Interpretation); interrogate historical data by uncovering the social, political, and economic context in which it was created (Standard 4, Historical Research); and, formulate a position or course of action on an issue (Standard 5, Historical Issues-Analysis and Decision Making).

IV. UNIT OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the social conditions which led to women's assumption of wider roles in the public arena during the Progressive era.

2. To examine the impact of higher education for African American women and for white middle-class women.

3. To investigate the methods women used to exert influence in the public arena, including the women's club movement, settlement houses, and labor organizations and to identify areas of social reform in which women's activism resulted in significant changes.

4. To identify the differences and resulting tensions between middle-class women reformers and their working-class clients.

5. To identify individuals, organizations, and events that led to popular acceptance of birth control and suffrage.

V. UNIT BACKGROUND MATERIALS

by Margaret McMillen

In the 1890s the character of American reform movements changed. Although Americans had always been intent on correcting society's failings, turn-of-the-century reform displayed a new attitude toward change and new methods by which women and men improved their society. An increasing acceptance of the Darwinian account of a universe of chance and accident began to replace religious faith in a purposeful universe and stimulated debates on the positive or progressive nature of some forms of conflict and change. As religious leaders and philosophers constructed a new philosophy to accommodate faith and science, a new generation of professionally trained reformers (which included an exceptional group of women, the first generation of American college women) were in the vanguard of a national reform movement.

Among the more visible signs of the changes brought on by industrialization and urbanization was the appearance of a new woman in the late nineteenth century. Elite women, the wives and daughters of middle-class families, and working-class women—both native-born and immigrant—entered the public arena with greater self-assurance and determination to attain recognition of their status as citizens and wage-earners.

By the last decade of the nineteenth century, large numbers of women actively pursued a variety of social reform programs through organized activities. Drawing on the traditions of female charitable and reform associations of the earlier years of the century and the movements of the 1840s and 1850s to advance their own position in American society by a call for equal rights, women's organizations of the late nineteenth century targeted specific social goals—suffrage, child-labor legislation, pure food and drug acts, labor organizing, consumer protection, prohibition, and expanded educational and career opportunities.

A passionate commitment to the cause of social justice fueled the new reform movement. The reformers had faith in the ability of reformed social institutions to correct abuses caused by the corruption of power in both government and business. Efficiency, organization, cooperation, and a search for order were the hallmarks of Progressivism. Progressive reformers, motivated by religious faith and moral outrage, openly challenged accepted attitudes towards the rights of workers; the privileges and legal protections enjoyed by large corporations; the role of women in the workplace, home, and body politic; public education; municipal government; race relations; and morals in their effort to preserve capitalism and democracy.

While women in the northern cities and western regions fought for equal rights and a wide range of social reforms, African American women in the South and in northern cities organized to fight for these same causes—but also fought against a rising tide of racism that was disenfranchising male voters, replacing slave codes with oppressive Black codes, establishing segregation as a rule, and creating an unprecedented climate of violence against free African Americans.

Since emancipation, African American women, struggling to organize family life, had been active in their communities through the formation of mutual aid societies, benevolent associations, educational and literary societies, and church groups. Black club women shared common Protestant Christian values with white women, although as documents will show, they consciously avoided identifying their organizations as "sister" organizations.

The disappointing struggle over the Fifteenth Amendment exposed the racism of many white feminists' programs as well as the sexism of some leading abolitionists. White women leaders often claimed that white women were more deserving of the vote than black men. In the end, the Fifteenth Amendment granted the vote to all men, regardless of race, and excluded all women. Nevertheless, women never abandoned the struggle for woman's suffrage but turned their attention to the grim labor situation facing the majority of black working women.

Similarities between the black women's club movement, white middle-class reform organizations, and working-class women's activism are limited, despite the rhetoric of common purposes, claims of feminist solidarity, and the sentiments of many individual members, or the efforts of the socialist movement to overcome the divisions of class, race, and gender. Alliances between organizations were preempted by the movements' separate programs based upon each one's subordinate role in relation to the dominant culture.

There were many contradictions in the reform programs of the Progressive era. The purpose of this unit is to expose students to the broad and diverse movements in which women played a central role. Students should understand how groups of women fought against a dominant culture, yet at the same time drew upon the assumptions of that culture to exclude other women. In short, there was no unified women's outlook during this period. Instead, women's perspectives varied across lines of race, class, and religion.

V. LESSON PLANS

1. **Women Get Organized**
2. **Education and the Modern Woman**
3. **Rebel Girls: Working Class Women**
4. **Margaret Sanger and the Birth Control Movement**
5. **The Debate Over Women's Suffrage**

WOMEN GET ORGANIZED

A. Objectives

1. To identify women's use of organized activities as a means of effecting social change during the Progressive era.
2. To identify the special role that African American women assumed in the "social uplift of the race."
3. To examine the emphasis Progressive reformers placed upon the need for social reconstruction beginning with improvements in housing, education, and employment opportunities.
4. To examine the similarities and differences between white middle-class women's reform organizations and those formed by African American women.
5. To identify individuals, organizations, and events which led to social reform in the Progressive era.

B. Teacher Background Materials

The most common means by which Progressive women advanced social goals was organized activities. Since the end of the Civil War women had sought to bridge the gap between their domestic ideals and politics through clubwork. Through clubwork women developed organizational talents and established impressive networks among local and municipal reform groups which led to the national organizations of the Progressive era. In the mid-1870s the largest women's organization of its day, the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), led by Frances Willard, brought together women from different classes and races under the banner of "home protection." The organization's top priority was the prohibition of liquor, as they cited excessive consumption of alcohol by men as the leading cause of suffering and poverty among women and children. The WCTU eventually expanded its reform agenda to include suffrage (they argued that women needed the vote to protect their homes and families from the problems caused by alcoholic men), labor unions, social hygiene, and politics.

By the 1890s American women had organized into a large number of organizations pursuing a variety of ends—suffrage, child-labor legislation, consumer protection, labor organizing, prohibition, and, among African American women, the anti-lynching movement.

C. Lesson Activities

1. Springboard Activity:

Ask students to take turns reading aloud from **DOCUMENT A**, "The Women's Clubs Embrace Reform." Once they have read this, have the class brainstorm the names of a variety of voluntary organizations that exist today. These should include student organizations, political organizations, clubs, associations, and family groups. Having drawn up a list of organizations, have students describe the common characteristics of these clubs. The teacher might ask how many students either belong to one of the organizations or know someone that does. Discuss with students the importance of organizations in achieving goals for their members. Also ask students why people belong to clubs, drawing the students' awareness to the individual's need to belong to a part of a larger group. Conclude by noting that this need was just as strong in the past as it is today.

2. **Within Cooperative Learning Groups** (one to two days):

   Divide the class into small groups and assign to each group either **DOCUMENT B, C,** or **D** listed below. In addition, have each group read **DOCUMENT E.** Then have students assume the role of a journalist writing for a local newspaper and write an editorial using their assigned document as a focus. Once they have written the editorials, have a member of each group read their editorial to the class. Compare the various editorials and discuss.

   DOCUMENT B (Group 1): "Charlotte Perkins Stetson Praises Women's Achievements in Club Activity and Professional Careers" (1898)

   DOCUMENT C (Group 2): Booker T. Washington's "The Club Movement Among Colored Women of America"

   DOCUMENT D (Group 3): "Letter from Florida Ruffin Ridley" (1893)

   DOCUMENT E (shared by all groups): Excerpt from Grover Cleveland's "Defense of True Womanhood" (1905)

3. **Alternative Activity:**

   Divide the class into groups of four. Then have one person in each group read **DOCUMENTS B, C, D,** and **E.** Once they have read the document quickly, have them re-read it, underlining the author's main points. Then have the groups compare and discuss the documents, paying particular attention to the following issues:

a. What are the goals or aims of clubwork in your document?

b. To what kind of clubs does your document refer?

c. How do the clubs in your document achieve their goals?

d. What impact do the women's clubs in your document have on society?

THE WOMEN'S CLUBS EMBRACE REFORM, 1904

...Outwardly, for twenty years, the woman's club remained an institution for the culture and pleasure of its members; but within, the desire for a larger opportunity was gradually strengthening. Parliamentary practice gave women confidence in their ability to lead larger issues to a successful conclusion. The inherent longing for power, coupled with confidence in the wisdom and beneficence of whatever women should do, brought the leaders of the club movement to a conception of social service. To effect this, further organization was necessary. It was then, in 1890, that a union of individual clubs was formed into a chartered body, known as the General Federation of Women's Clubs....

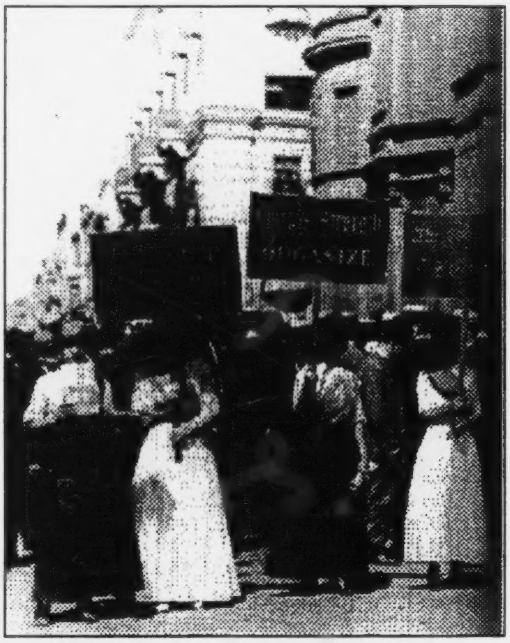
Securing the passage of laws is the extreme instance of what organized women have accomplished through the medium of public opinion. Many other concrete illustrations drawn from local conditions might be given; but they would all serve to illustrate that the woman's club is determining the mind of the community in its relation to many educational, philanthropic, and reformatory questions....

The federation of one of the more enlightened states has recently undertaken to enter the field of direct politics. I quote the advice it gives to its constituents:—

"Before senators and representatives are even nominated, it is very essential that club women look up the record of the various candidates in their districts, and satisfy themselves as to their position regarding women upon boards of control of state institutions. Find out how they voted last year. Information will be gladly furnished by members of this committee. Then strive to create a sufficient public sentiment in your own locality to defeat, at the party caucus, any nominee known to oppose women representatives upon Boards of Control."...

Six years ago the General Federation undertook to help the solution of certain industrial problems, notably to further organization among working women; to secure and enforce child labor legislation where needed; to further attendance at school; and to secure humane conditions under which labor is performed. State federations have acted in accordance with the General Federation's plans to appoint standing industrial committees, procure investigations, circulate literature, and create a public sentiment in favor of these causes. In Illinois this indirect power was of much aid in securing a Child Labor Law. In other communities something has been accomplished by way of enacting new laws or enforcing existing ones, showing that organized women readily avail themselves of the chance for indirect service in promoting the intelligent efforts of the federations....

Martha E. D. White, "Work of the Women's Club," Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 93 (May, 1904).



Child labor protest held in the early 1900s.

CHARLOTTE PERKINS STETSON PRAISES WOMEN'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN CLUB ACTIVITY AND PROFESSIONAL CAREERS

(1898)

The women's club movement is one of the most important sociological phenomena of the century,—indeed, of all centuries,—marking as it does the first timid steps toward social organization of these so long unsocialized members of our race. Social life is absolutely conditioned upon organization. The military organizations which promote peace, the industrial organizations which maintain life, and all the educational, religious, and charitable organizations which serve our higher needs constitute the essential factors of that social activity in which, as individuals, we live and grow; and it is plain, therefore, that while women had no part in these organizations they had no part in social life. Their main relation to society was an individual one, an animal one, a sexual one. They produced the people of whom society was made, but they were not society. Of course, they were indispensable in this capacity; but one might as well call food a part of society because people could not exist without eating as to call women a social factor because people could not exist without being born. Women have made the people who made the world, and will always continue so to do. But they have heretofore had a most insignificant part in the world their sons have made.

The only form of organization possible to women was for long the celibate religious community. This has always been dear to them; and, as to-day many avoid undesired marriage for the sake of "independence," so in earlier times many fled from undesired marriage to the communal independence of the convent. The fondness of women for the church has been based, not only on religious feeling, but on the force of the human longing for co-ordinate interest and activities; and only here could this be gratified. In the church at least they could be together. They could feel in common and act in common,—the deepest human joy. As the church widened its activities, it has found everywhere in women its most valuable and eager workers. To labor together, together to raise funds for a common end, for a new building or a new minister, for local charities or for foreign missions,—but to labor together, and for other needs than those of the family relation,—this has always met glad response from the struggling human soul in woman. When it became possible to work together for other than religious ends,—when large social service was made possible to women, as in our sanitary commission during the last war,—women everywhere rose to meet the need. The rise and spread of that greatest of women's organizations, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, has shown anew how ready is the heart of woman to answer the demands of other than personal relations.

And now the whole country is budding into women's clubs. The clubs are uniting and federating by towns, states, nations: there are even world organizations. The sense of human unity is growing daily among women. Not to see it is impossible. Not to watch with pleasure and admiration this new growth in social life, this sudden and enormous re-enforcement of our best forces from the very springs of life, only shows how blind we are to true human advantage, how besotted in our fondness for sex-distinction in excess.

One of the most valuable features of this vast line of progress is the new heroism it is pouring into life. The crumbling and flattening of ambitions and ideals under pressure of our modern business life is a patent fact. We are growing to surrender taste and conscience and honor itself to the demands of business success, prostituting the noblest talents to the most ignoble uses with that last excuse of cowardice,—"A man must live." Into this phase of life comes a new spirit—the spirit of such women as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony; of Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell and her splendid sisterhood; of all the women who have battled and suffered for half a century, forcing their way, with sacrifices never to be told, into the field of freedom so long denied them,—not for themselves alone, but for one another. We have loudly cried out at the injury to the home and family which are supposed to follow such a course. We have unsparingly ridiculed the unattractive and unfeminine among these vanguard workers. But few have thought what manner of spirit it must take to leave the dear old easy paths so long trodden by so many feet, and go to hew out new ones alone. The nature of the effort involved and the nature of the opposition incurred conduced to lessen the soft charms and graces of the ultra-feminine state; but the women who follow and climb swiftly up the steps which these great leader so laboriously built may do the new work in the new places, and still keep much of what these strenuous heroes had to lose.

It is not being a doctor that makes a woman unwomanly, but the treatment which the first women medical students and physicians received was such as to make even men unmanly. That time is largely past. The gates are nearly all open, at least in some places; and the racial activities of women are free to develop as rapidly as the nature of the case will allow. The main struggle now is with the distorted nature of the creature herself. Grand as are the women who embody at whatever cost the highest spirit of the age, there still remains to us the heavy legacy of the years behind,—the innumerable weak and little women, with the aspirations of an affectionate guinea pig. The soul of woman must speak through the long accumulations of her intensified sex-nature, through the uncertain impulses of a starved and thwarted class. She must recognize that she is handicapped. She must understand her difficulty, and meet it bravely and firmly.

But this is a matter for personal volition, for subjective consciousness. The thing to see and to rejoice in is that, with and without their conscious volition, with or without the approval and assistance of men, in spite of that crowning imbecility of history,—the banded opposition of some women to the advance of the others,—the female of our race is making sure and rapid progress in human development.

Charlotte Perkins Stetson (Gilman), Women and Economics (Boston: Small, Maynard, and Company, 1898; reprinted by Harper and Row, New York, 1966, pp. 164-168.

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON'S
"THE CLUB MOVEMENT AMONG COLORED WOMEN OF AMERICA"

Afro-American women of the United States have never had the benefit of a discriminating judgment concerning their worth as women made up of the good and bad of human nature. What they have been made to be and not what they are, seldom enters into the best or worst opinion concerning them.

In studying the status of Afro-American women as revealed in their club organizations, it ought to be borne in mind that such social differentiations as "women's interests, children's interests, and men's interests" that are so finely worked out in the social development of the more favored races are but recent recognitions in the progressive life of the negro race. Such specializing had no economic value in slavery days, and the degrading habit of regarding the negro race as an unclassified people has not yet wholly faded into a memory.

The negro as an "alien" race, as a "problem," as an "industrial factor," as "ex-slaves," as "ignorant" etc., are well known and instantly recognized; but colored women as mothers, as home-makers, as the center and source of the social life of the race have received little or no attention. These women have been left to grope their way unassisted toward a realization of those domestic virtues, moral impulses and standards of family and social life that are the badges of race respectability. They have had no special teachers to instruct them. No conventions of distinguished women of the more favored race have met to consider their peculiar needs. There has been no fixed public opinion to which they could appeal; no protection against the libelous attacks upon their characters, and no chivalry generous enough to guarantee their safety against man's inhumanity to woman. Certain it is that colored women have been the least known, and the most ill-favored class of women in this country.

Thirty-five years ago they were unsocialized, unclassed and unrecognized as either maids or matrons. They were simply women whose character and personality excited no interest. If within thirty-five years they have become sufficiently important to be studied apart from the general race problem and have come to recognized as an integral part of the general womanhood of American civilization, that fact is a gratifying evidence of real progress.

In considering the social advancement of these women, it is important to keep in mind the point from which progress began, and the fact that they have been mainly self-taught in all those precious things that make for social order, purity and character. They have gradually become conscious of the fact that progress includes a great deal more than what is generally meant by the terms culture, education and contact.

The club movement among colored women reaches into the sub-social condition of the entire race. Among white women clubs mean the forward movement of the best women in the interest of the best womanhood. Among colored women the club is the effort of the few competent in behalf of the many incompetent; that is to say that the club is only one of many means for the social uplift of a race. Among white women the club is the onward movement of the already uplifted.

The consciousness of being fully free has not yet come to the great masses of the colored women in this country. The emancipation of the mind and spirit of the race could not be accomplished by legislation. More time, more patience, more suffering and more charity are still needed to complete the work of the emancipation.

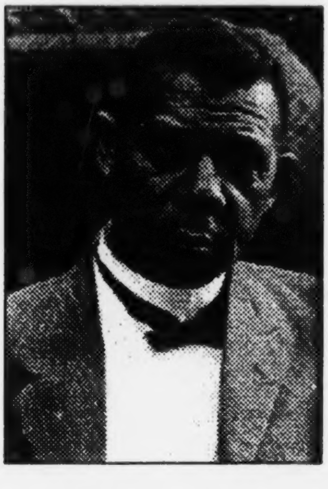
The training which first enabled colored women to organize and successfully carry on club work was originally obtained in church work. These churches have been and still are the great preparatory schools in which the primary lessons of social order, mutual trustfulness and united effort have been taught. The churches have been sustained, enlarged and beautified principally through the organized efforts of their women members. The meaning of unity of effort for the common good, the development of social sympathies grew into woman's consciousness through the privileges of church work.

Still another school of preparation for colored women has been their secret societies. "The ritual of these secret societies is not without a certain social value." They demand a higher order of intelligence than is required for church membership. Care for the sick, provisions for the decent burial of the indigent dead, the care for orphans and the enlarging sense of sisterhood all contributed to the development of the very conditions of heart that qualify women for the more inclusive work of those social reforms that are the aim of women's clubs. The churches and secret societies have helped to make colored women acquainted with the general social condition of the race and the possibilities of social improvement.

With this training the more intelligent women of the race could not fail to follow the example and be inspired by the larger club movement of the white women. The need of social reconstruction became more and more apparent as they studied the results of women's organizations. Better homes, better schools, better protection for girls of scant home training, better sanitary conditions, better opportunities for competent young women to gain employment, and the need of being better known to the American people appealed to the conscience of progressive colored women from many communities.

The clubs and leagues organized among colored women have all been more or less in direct response to these appeals. Seriousness of purpose has thus been the main characteristic of all these organizations. While the National Federation of Woman's Clubs has served as a guide and inspiration to colored women, the club movement among them is something deeper than a mere imitation of white women. It is nothing less than the organized anxiety of women who have become intelligent enough to recognize their own low social condition and strong enough to initiate the forces of reform.

Booker T. Washington, A New Negro For a New Century, (Miami: Mnemosyne Publishing, Inc., 1969), pp. 379-384.



Booker T. Washington

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LETTER FROM FLORIDA RUFFIN RIDLEY, CORRESPONDING SECRETARY OF THE WOMEN'S ERA CLUB OF BOSTON TO MRS. ORMISTON CHANT (UNITARIAN CHURCH), 1893.

Dear Mrs. Ormiston Chant:

A year ago this month the members of the Women's Era Club of Boston, Massachusetts, were privileged to have you address them as a body. The occasion was the first public meeting of the club, and besides yourself Mrs. Louis Stone, Mrs. Cheney, Mrs. Diaz, and Mrs. Spaulding spoke. It is safe to say that all of these noble women and fine speakers no one did more than yourself in strengthening the impulse to good work; in giving fresh inspiration toward right living. Your name and that speech have been to us a refreshing memory. Think then the shock it has occasioned us to hear that through your efforts a resolution at the National Conference of the Unitarian Church denouncing lynching was defeated.

We feel assured and do truly believe that you opposed the resolution from a high and moral standpoint, but we also feel assured that your position on this subject is the result of influences entirely one sided and that you will at least be interested to hear the other side.

We, as members of the Women's Era Club, believe we speak for the colored women of America. We have organized as have our women everywhere to help in the world's work. Not only by endeavoring to uplift ourselves and our race but by giving a helping hand and an encouraging word wherever they may be called for. As colored women we have suffered and do suffer too much to be blind to the suffering of others, but naturally we are more keenly alive to our own suffering than to others. We therefore feel that we would be false to ourselves, to our opportunities and to our race should we keep silent in a case like this.

We have endured much and we believe with patience; we have seen our world broken down, our men made fugitives and wanderers or their youth and strength spent in bondage. We ourselves are daily hindered and oppressed in the race of life; we know that every opportunity for advancement, for peace and happiness will be denied us; that in most sections Christian men and women absolutely refuse not only to live beside us and eat with us, but also to open their churches to us; we know that our children, no matter with what tenderness they have been reared, are considered legitimate prey for insult; that our young girls can at any time be thrust into foul and filthy cars, and no matter their needs, be refused food and shelter.

We feel deeply the lack of opportunities for culture brought by the Public Libraries, the Concert and Lecture Halls, which are everywhere denied us in the South. We view these things with amazement, but realizing that prejudice can only be eliminated by time and our general progress, we have tried to bear these indignities put upon us by a professedly Christian people with the fortitude and dignity of real Christians.

All this we have borne and do bear with no more or less patience but in the interest of common humanity, in the interest of justice, for the good name of our country, we solemnly raise our voice against the horrible crimes of lynch law as practiced in the South, and we call upon Christians everywhere to do the same or be branded as sympathizers with the murderers. We here solemnly deny that the black men are the foul fiends they are pictured; we demand that until at least one crime is proven upon them that judgement be suspended.

We know positively of case after case where innocent men have died horrible deaths. We know positively of cases that have been made up. We know positively of cases where black men have been lynched for white men's crimes. We know positively of black men murdered for insignificant offenses. All that we ask for is justice—not mercy or palliation—simply justice. Surely that is not too much for loyal citizens of a free country to demand.

We do not pretend to say that there are no black villains. Baseness is not confined to race. We read with horror of two different colored girls who were recently assaulted by white men in the South. We should regret any lynchings of the offenders by black men but we shall not have occasion. Should these offenders receive any punishment at all, it will be a marvel.

We do not brand the race because of these many atrocities by white men, but because lynch law is not visited upon this class of offenders, we repudiate the claim that lynching is the natural and commendable outburst of a high-spirited people. We do not expect that white women feel as deeply as we. We know of good and high-minded women made widows, of sweet and innocent children made fatherless by a mob of boys "looking for fun." In their names we utter our most solemn protest. For their sakes, we call upon workers of humanity everywhere, if they can do nothing for us, in mercy's name do not raise their voices against us.

Florida Ruffin Ridley
Corresponding Secretary

Quoted in Alfreda M. Duster, ed., Crusade For Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 297-300.

Ida B. Wells helped organize the Women's Era Club of Boston and led a national campaign against lynching.

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GROVER CLEVELAND'S DEFENSE OF TRUE WOMANHOOD, 1905

Woman's Clubs Not Only Harmful, But a Menace

I am persuaded that without exaggeration of statement we may assume that there are woman's clubs whose objects and intents are not only harmful, but harmful in a way that directly menaces the integrity of our homes and the benign disposition and character of our wifehood and motherhood;...I believe that it should be boldly declared that the best and safest club for a woman to patronize is her home. American wives and American mothers, as surely as "the hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world," have, through their nurture of children and their influence over men, the destinies of our Nation in their keeping to a greater extent than any other single agency. It is surely not soft-hearted sentimentalism which insists that, in a country where the people rule, a decisive share in securing the perpetuity of its institutions falls upon the mothers who devote themselves to teaching their children who are to become rulers, lessons of morality and patriotism and disinterested citizenship. Such thoughts suggest how supremely great is the stake of our country in woman's unperverted steadfastness, and enjoin the necessity of its protection against all risks and all temptations.

The Real Path of True Womanhood

I am in favor of according to women the utmost social enjoyment; and I am profoundly thankful that this, in generous and sufficient measure, is within their reach without encountering the temptations or untoward influences so often found in the surroundings of woman's clubs.

For the sake of our country, for the sake of our homes, and for the sake of our children, I would have our wives and mothers loving and devoted, though all others may be sordid and heedless; I would have them disinterested and trusting, though all others may be selfish and cunning; I would have them happy and contented in following the Divinely appointed path of true womanhood, though all others may grope in the darkness of their own devices.

Grover Cleveland, "Woman's Mission and Woman's Clubs," Ladies Home Journal, Vol. 22 (May, 1905).

EDUCATION AND THE MODERN WOMAN

A. Objectives

1. To understand the impact that education had upon the lives of American women during the Progressive era.

2. To analyze how educational opportunities broadened the career choices available to some women during the Progressive era.

3. To study how settlement houses provided an emotional and economic substitute for traditional family life for their college women residents.

4. To examine the reasons why African American college women saw it as their responsibility to uplift their race.

B. Teacher Background Materials

Until the late nineteenth century, educating women remained controversial. Leading scientific experts warned that women's limited energies made them poor candidates for the rigors of higher education and that studying would harm the "female apparatus." The first generation of college women, especially those who went on to do pioneering work in the emerging disciplines of the social sciences, proved otherwise.

While only a small minority of American women were college educated, by 1900 there were over 85,000 enrolled women, composing approximately 37% of college students. By 1920 the number of college women had risen to 283,000 or 47.3 percent of enrollments. Women would not constitute such a high percentage of enrollments again until the late 1960s. Women attended private eastern women's colleges such as Vassar (1865), Wellesley and Smith (1875), and Bryn Mawr (1884). Others attended larger, coeducational private universities, but the greatest progress was made in the large state universities of the West and Midwest, such as Wisconsin (1867), California (1868), and Michigan (1870).

African American women in the 1880s also made impressive gains. Many families sent their daughters to well-funded segregated institutions, but even more attended desegregated institutions such as Oberlin, the University of Chicago, Cornell, Radcliffe, and Wellesley. A number of African American women founded their own schools in order to provide a liberal arts curriculum during a time when education for African American students in the South was limited to vocational training.

All college-educated women, however, faced the frustrating problem of "after college, what?" Occupational barriers existed in every direction. African American women were barred from most factory and office jobs, and consequently were found in disproportionately high numbers in both menial occupations and in the professions—where they found less competition. Educated white women landed secretarial positions at lower wages than men, and rarely moved up the managerial ladder. Even those women who succeeded in gaining a foothold in the professions often found themselves marginalized.

And there was always the question of marriage. Could the "new woman" successfully fill her roles as wife, mother, and wage-earner? Most could not. Most employers, including schools, would not hire married women, dismissed those who did marry, and some agencies required a wife to resign if her husband was gainfully employed. Samuel Gompers, leader of the American Federation of Labor, voiced the prevailing attitude toward women who worked to support their families, "...I have no hesitancy in answering, positively, and absolutely, 'No.' "

In some cases, however, African American women were the exception. There were many reasons for this generation of African American women's success in juggling careers with marriage. Anna Julia Cooper believed that married women should not rely "on the marriage relation for physical support," but should earn their own livelihoods. Because of the premium women placed upon improving the "race," marriage and family were highly valued. Many women of this generation had been born into slavery, and they were determined to raise families in freedom and financial security. Educated women sought out marriage partners or husbands who shared their sense of commitment to the uplift of their race. Economic necessity, of course, was another factor. Wages for blacks were lower across the board, making it necessary for both husband and wife to work to support a family. Community work was a natural extension of women's commitment to taking active roles in improving the quality of life in society.

C. Lesson Activities

1. Individual and Class Interviews (two days)

   a. As a class, brainstorm a set of five interview questions to pose to famous women of the Progressive era on the topic "Education and the Modern Woman." Have the students figure out what they would like to know. Sample questions might include "If you could choose your own tombstone inscription what would it be?"; "What would you like to be remembered for after you die?"; and "What goals would you like to accomplish while you are still alive?"

   b. Divide the class into four groups and have each group read a different document, choosing among **F, G, H,** or **I**. After they have finished reading, pair up individuals from different groups. Have one student in each pair assume the role of the author of his or her document. The other student asks the interview questions decided upon by the class in an effort to learn as much about that woman as possible.

   c. If time allows, have the partners reverse roles. Or, as an alternative, conduct a class interview in which a representative of each woman answers questions from those who read documents by other women.

2. Evaluation Assessment (one to two days)

   a. Have students write one-page papers explaining what they learned about the woman whose role their interview partner assumed.

b. Engage the class in a discussion in which they share what they learned about these four women, dwelling upon their personal characteristics, successes, failures, and aspirations.

D. Additional Teacher Background for Documents G and H

Document G is an excerpt from Jane Addams' autobiography, Twenty Years at Hull-House (1910) in which she describes her first days at Hull House.

During the Progressive era, settlement houses provided a wide range of social services in some of the most crowded and impoverished working-class neighborhoods in the nation's industrialized cities. The Hull House resident social workers, primarily college-educated women from the middle classes, provided day care, health and hygiene services, language classes (English), recreational programs, and a variety of music, dance and craft classes to neighborhood residents. They also developed an impressive and effective network of contacts with other settlement house workers, government officials, charity organizations, local politicians, religious and labor leaders, educators and employers, and were able to shape important social legislation, such as anti-sweatshop laws mandating an eight-hour day for women and children employed in Illinois manufacturing, of the Progressive era. In addition, the settlements provided many college women with an emotional and financial alternative to a traditional family life.

Document H is an excerpt from Lucy Sprague Mitchell's Two Lives: The Story of Wesley Clair Mitchell and Myself (1953).

Lucy Sprague Mitchell was born and raised in a privileged Chicago family. She attended Radcliffe College, from which she graduated in 1900. In 1906 she became dean of women at the University of California at Berkeley where she confronted the problem of counseling women on their career options after college.

In 1911 she took a leave of absence from the university to investigate career opportunities for college women. She entered a settlement house in New York, the Henry Street Settlement, as an apprentice and did the same at a charity organization, a foundation (the Russell Sage Foundation), the Salvation Army, and a public school administration office. She eventually resigned her position at Berkeley and founded the Bureau of Educational Experiments in New York.

ANNA JULIA COOPER EMPHASIZES THE IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN'S HIGHER EDUCATION

...to-day there are one hundred and ninety-eight colleges for women, and two hundred and seven coeducational colleges and universities in the United States alone offering the degree of B.A. to women, and sending out yearly into the arteries of this nation a warm, rich flood of strong, brave, active, energetic, well-equipped, thoughtful women—women who can think as well as feel, and who feel none the less because they think—women who are none the less tender and true for the parchment scroll they bear in their hands—women who have given a deeper, richer, nobler and grander meaning to the world "womanly" than any one-sided masculine definition could ever have suggested or inspired—women whom the world has long waited for in pain and anguish till there should be at last added to its forces and allowed to permeate its thought the complement of that masculine influence which has dominated it for fourteen centuries.

Since the idea of order and subordination succumbed to barbarian brawn and brutality in the fifth century, the civilized world has been like a child brought up by his father. It has needed the great mother heart to teach it to be pitiful, to love mercy, to succor the weak and care for the lowly.

...There is, then, a real and special influence of woman. An influence subtle and often involuntary, an influence so intimately interwoven in, so intricately interpenetrated by the masculine influence of time that it is often difficult to extricate the delicate meshes and analyze and identify the closely clinging fibers. And yet, without this influence—so long as woman sat with bandaged eyes and manacled hands, fast bound in the clamps of ignorance and inaction, the world of thought moved in its orbit like the revolutions of the moon; with one face (the man's face) always out, so that the spectator could not distinguish whether it was disc or sphere.

Now I claim that it is the prevalence of the Higher Education among women, the making it a common everyday affair for women to reason and think and express their thought, the training and stimulus which enable and encourage women to administer to the world the bread it needs as well as the sugar it cries for; in short it is the transmitting the potential forces of her soul into dynamic factors that has given symmetry and completeness to the world's agencies. So only could it be consummated that Mercy, the lesson she teaches, and Truth, the task man has set himself, should meet together: that righteousness, or *rightness*, man's ideal,—and *peace*, its necessary 'other half,' should kiss each other.

We must thank the general enlightenment and independence of woman (which we may now regard as a *fait accompli*) that both these forces are now at work in the world, and it is fair to demand from them for the twentieth century a higher type of civilization than any attained in the nineteenth. Religion, science, art, economics, have all needed the feminine flavor; and literature, the expression of what is permanent and best in all of these, may be caused at any time to measure the strength of the feminine ingredient. You will not find theology consigning infants to lakes of unquenchable fire long after women have had a chance to grasp, master, and wield its dogmas. You will not find science annihilating personality from the government of the Universe and making of God an ungovernable, unintelligible, blind, often destructive physical force; you will not find jurisprudence formulating as an axiom the absurdity that man and wife are one, and that one the man—that the married woman may not hold or bequeath her own property save as subject to her husband's direction; you will not find political economists declaring that the only possible adjustment between laborers and capitalists is that of selfishness and rapacity—that each must get all he can and keep all that he gets, while the world cries *laissez faire* and the lawyers explain, "it is the beautiful working of the law of supply and demand;" in fine, you will not find the law of love shut out from the affairs of men after the feminine half of the world's truth is completed.

All I claim is that there is a feminine as well as a masculine side to truth; that these are related not as inferior and superior, not as better and worse, not as weaker and stronger, but as complements—complements in one necessary and symmetric whole. That as the man is more noble in reason, so the woman is more quick in sympathy. That as he is indefatigable in pursuit of abstract truth, so is she in caring for the interests by the way—striving tenderly and lovingly that not one of the cast of these 'little ones' should perish. That while we not unfrequently see women who reason, we say, with the coolness and precision of a man, and men as considerate of helplessness as a woman, still there is a general consensus of mankind that the one trait is essentially masculine and the other is peculiarly feminine. That both are needed to be worked into the training of children, in order that our boys may supplement their virility by tenderness and sensibility, and our girls may round out their gentleness by strength and self-reliance. That, as both are alike necessary in giving symmetry to the individual, so a nation or race will degenerate into mere emotionalism on the one hand, or bullyism on the other, if dominated by either exclusively; lastly, and most emphatically, that the feminine factor can have its proper effect only through woman's development and education so that she may fitly and intelligently stamp her force on the forces of her day, and add her modicum to the riches of the world's thought.

Anna Julia Cooper, A Voice From the South, By a Black Woman of the South (Xenia, Ohio: The Aldine Printing House, 1892; reprinted in New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), 50-61.

JANE ADDAMS DESCRIBES THE 'EARLY DAYS' AT HULL-HOUSE

Jane Addams (1860-1935)
American social reformer,
c. 1914.
Reprinted courtesy of
The Bettman Archives

In those early days we were often asked why we had come to live on Halsted Street when we could afford to live somewhere else. I remember one man who used to shake his head and say it was "the strangest thing he had met in his experience," but who was finally convinced that it was "not strange but natural." In time it came to seem natural to all of us that the Settlement should be there. If it is natural to feed the hungry and care for the sick, it is certainly natural to give pleasure to the young, comfort to the aged, and to minister to the deep-seated craving for social intercourse that all men feel. Whoever does it is rewarded by something which, if not gratitude, is at least spontaneous and vital and lacks that irksome sense of obligation with which a substantial benefit is too often acknowledged.

In addition to the neighbors who responded to the receptions and classes, we found those who were too battered and oppressed to care for them. To these, however, was left that susceptibility to the bare offices of humanity which raises such offices into a bond of fellowship.

From the first it seemed understood that we were ready to perform the humblest neighborhood services. We were asked to wash the newborn babies, and to prepare the dead for burial, to nurse the sick, and to "mind the children."

Occasionally these neighborly offices unexpectedly uncovered ugly human traits. For six weeks after an operation we kept in one of our three bedrooms a forlorn little baby who, because he was born with a cleft palate, was most unwelcome even to his mother, and we were horrified when he died of neglect a week after he was returned to his home; a little Italian bride of fifteen sought shelter with us one November evening, to escape her husband who had beaten her every night for a week when he returned home from work, because she had lost her wedding ring; two of us officiated quite alone at the birth of an illegitimate child because the doctor was late in arriving, and none of the honest Irish matrons would "touch the likes of her;" we ministered at the deathbed of a young man, who during a long illness of tuberculosis had received so many bottles of whisky through the mistaken kindness of his friends, that the cumulative effect produced wild periods of exultation, in one of which he died.

We were also early impressed with the curious isolation of many of the immigrants; an Italian woman once expressed her pleasure in the red roses that she saw at one of our receptions in surprise that they had been "brought so fresh all the way from Italy." She would not believe for an instant that they had been grown in America. She said that she had lived in Chicago for six years and had never seen any roses, whereas in Italy she had seen them every summer in great profusion. During all that time, of course, the woman had lived within ten blocks of a florist's window; she had not been more than a five-cent car ride away from the public parks; but she had never dreamed of faring forth for herself, and no one had taken her. Her conception of America had been the untidy street in which she lived and had made her long struggle to adapt herself to American ways.

But in spite of some untoward experiences, we were constantly impressed with the uniform kindness and courtesy we received. Perhaps these first days laid the simple human foundations which are certainly essential for continuous living among the poor: first, genuine preference for residence in an industrial quarter to any other part of the city, because it is interesting and makes the human appeal; and second, the conviction, in the words of Canon Barnett, that the things which make men finer and better than the things that keep them apart, and that these basic likenesses, if they are properly accentuated, easily transcend the less essential differences of race, language, creed, and tradition.

Perhaps even in those first days we made a beginning toward that object which was afterward stated in our charter: "To provide a center for a higher civic and social life; to institute and maintain educational and philanthropic enterprises, and to investigate and improve the conditions in the industrial districts of Chicago."

Jane Addams, Twenty Years at Hull House with Autobiographical Notes (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1910; 25th reprint, 1968), pp. 109-112

LUCY SPRAGUE MITCHELL WITNESSES WOMEN'S REFORM EFFORTS IN NEW YORK

When I returned to Berkeley for two more years, Lucy Ward Stebbins, whom I had known at Radcliffe, was appointed as my assistant with the hope that she would be my successor. She was. Before my resignation should take place, I wanted to do something more definite, more constructive about the kind of opportunities the University offered its women students. My early protest against the narrowness of professional training offered had increased rather than decreased. The more I saw of these vigorous western girls, the more preposterous it seemed that they should have no choice except to become teachers—preposterous for them and certainly not desirable for children. For what other professions could the University prepare them? To find an answer to that question became an obsession. Once I had an answer, I might be able to give some impulse to new offerings within the University, but it was no use complaining until I had something constructive to suggest. My plan was to take a four months' leave in New York to find the answer. It was certainly a naive plan. But I put it through.

John Graham Brooks was visiting me when I evolved this plan. It seemed to him an inspiration. He outfitted me with a suitcaseful of letters of introductions ranging from Anne Morgan to Lillian Wald. And as soon as it could be arranged, off I went to New York. I felt I could not understand much as a mere observer. So I asked six different organizations to let me work for them for a few weeks each, not for any result that could benefit them—I was not as naive as that!—But to help me understand their problems, how they were tackling them and what kind of qualities each job demanded. I made my request in the high cause of broadening women's education! And in every case, I was accepted. They not only gave me a small practical job to do, but they explained the relation of my small job to their total work. They let me sit in on committees and staff meetings. I learned more in those few months than in any comparable period in my life. They were months of turmoil in more ways than what was happening in New York. For I was then receiving long letters from Robin every few days and writing him as many in return. I was trying to decide whether I should marry him.

I went first to Lillian Wald at the Henry Street Settlement. I became her big-eyed shadow for several weeks, listening in at discussions of social, economic and particularly labor problems in real, not theoretical, situations. I took over a class of boys a few times. Not knowing what to do with them, I took them on a trip to near-by Brooklyn Bridge, and we became absorbed in the shipping we could see as we peered down at the East River and docks. I went for awhile as an assistant to one of the Henry Street nurses. I found that my German made it possible for me to understand Yiddish, which most of the patients talked. Henry Moskovitch, then a young man living at Henry Street, took me to the Yiddish theater. He took me often to a restaurant where I met newspaper men from Yiddish papers. They talked about the "gentile press" and the "gentile theater." I realized with a start that I was a "gentile" to them. I had never thought of myself or my many Jewish friends as anything except Americans with different religious backgrounds. It was my first genuine realization of the cleavage in our culture between Jews and gentiles.

One supplemental experience at Henry Street gave me a jolt. I arrived during the garbage strike, and for days no one mentioned that the great heaps of uncollected garbage were not the usual place for the children of the East Side to play. Another jolting experience at the settlement was rooming with Florence Kelley, whom I had known only by name as a great figure in labor problems. Never before or since have I met such a single-minded human dynamo. She was then living in a huge room, the parlor floor of one of the Henry Street houses; she retired to one end, and I was put in at the other. She had two dresses, made alike. Each had a kind of dickey which could be yanked out, and suddenly her work dress was transformed into her evening dress. All her possessions were equally pruned. Her life was concentrated on current labor legislation, and she budgeted her time and her interests to further this drive. She took me on for a time. I followed her around, worked on a text in her office and listened to labor discussions and tirades against capitalists and politicians. I can still feel my terror at crossing through the traffic of New York streets with her. She behaved like Moses crossing the Red Sea. And the traffic behaved like the Red Sea. It simply dammed up on both sides while Florence Kelley and I walked through an empty lane.

Then I went to Mary Richmond at the Charity Organization, where I investigated cases and reported to her. Mrs. Kelley was so indignant at my wasting my time on mawkish charity that she scarcely spoke to me during that time. I soon found that living at the Henry Street Settlement and rooming with Florence Kelley was more than I could take, physically and emotionally. I decided that I must move to a hotel if I were to get through the rest of these intense months with more shifts of work. In a small hotel in the West Forties I felt like a pampered darling but I began to sleep again.

My next job was with Pauline Goldmark, then a beautiful young research worker with eyes like moonstones. She was in charge of a survey of a district in the West Fifties made by the Russell Sage Foundation under the Glenns. Here I met a new kind of intensity—the passion to gather accurate social facts and interpret them by logical, impersonal reasoning. I was out of the turmoil of dealing with practical emergencies and into the turmoil of thinking scientifically. It was blessed relief, and I fell to work eagerly with materials new to me.

Then I thought I'd like to see these same people whom I knew on paper in a detached, scientific way, through completely different lenses. So I signed up as a Salvation Army worker in this district. Again, as with the Henry Street nurse, I began climbing tenement stairs. But now the help I was supposed to bring along with food and old clothes was spiritual. There was great human kindness mingled with the religious fervor of the Salvation Army workers but not the constructive attack on family needs such as I found at Henry Street. I learned much about city institutions, for I took people to Bellevue Hospital and other clinics. One old lady I took to Randalls Island. The poor old soul knew she would never leave that ghastly poorhouse. She begged me to tell them I was her cousin. "It makes a difference, you know, Dearie!"

My last ten days I spent with Julia Richman, who was attacking the problem of education within the public schools with freshness and intelligence. During this last period I was only an observer. I did not use this time to investigate teaching as a profession for our women students, but to help me solve my own personal problems about the work I wanted to do. For me, this brief time in a New York public school was of tremendous significance. This is the work for me, I thought. Public education is the most constructive attack on social problems, for it deals with children and the future. It requires endless research concerning children and what they need to make them grow wholesomely. It requires experimentation in curriculum for children and in teacher education. It requires an understanding of our culture. It is the synthesis of all my interests, all my hopes for humanity. I returned to Berkeley with a clear focus in my own life from which I have never since deviated. My whole later work life in New York had public education as its aim. But it took over thirty years in New York before I could get into actual working relations with the public schools.

I wrote like mad in the peace of the long lonely trip across the continent. In Berkeley, I soon submitted a report to President Wheeler with suggestions for new courses and field work to be given at the University. On the train, I made outlines for two articles which I wrote at once. I don't remember if I gave a title to the first article. Nowadays I should probably call it "Social Studies for Grownups." It bore the imprint of Robin and the thinking he had stimulated in me in his course on Economic Origins. It was my attempt to show the contributions of psychology, sociology, economics and anthropology in understanding human beings and our culture in the United States—all applied to teacher education. I remember that I worked out the interrelations on a big chart. The name Human Geography had not yet been invented, but much of my later work in geography was follow-up of this first fumbling effort of mine to show the interdependence of people and the earth and how social institutions and attitudes grow out of the work that people do which is economically important to them.

A 1910 tenement house similar to those visited by Mitchell.
Reprinted courtesy of The Bettman Archive.

The title of my second article was "The Whole Child." This phrase is now stale and stereotyped but then it represented a new and independent conception in me. It was my first formulation of an educational credo which I have been trying to clarify ever since. I showed my articles to Robin and also to Sadie Gregory, whose genius for friendship made it easy to share even half-thoughts with her. Then I put them away for the time being. But I did not put their contents out of my mind.

My New York experiences intensified my desire to resign as Dean and go into work with children, if possible in New York. I was thoroughly dissatisfied with the education that my college students had had before coming to college. I was equally dissatisfied with the smug satisfaction of the faculty with their off-the-earth courses. I was tired of working in an academic ivory tower, with golden domes but no firm foundations. I wanted to mix cement and sharp stones and build an educational foundation which would develop people with live thinking and live feelings.

Lucy Sprague Mitchell, Two Lives: The Story of Wesley Clair Mitchell and Myself (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1953), pp. 207-211. Reprinted by permission of McIntosh and Otis, Inc. (appeared in Susan Ware's ***Modern American Women****)*

CHARLOTTE PERKINS STETSON DISCUSSES WOMEN'S STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY

The Federal Democracy in its organic union, reacting upon individuals, has so strengthened, freed, emboldened, the human soul in America that we have thrown off slavery, and with the same impulse have set in motion the long struggle toward securing woman's fuller equality before the law.

This struggle has been carried on unflaggingly for fifty years, and fast nears its victorious end. It is not only in the four States where full suffrage is exercised by both sexes, nor in the twenty-four where partial suffrage is given to women, that we are to count progress; but in the changes legal and social, mental and physical, which mark the advance of the mother of the world toward her full place. Have we not all observed the change even in size of the modern woman, with its accompanying strength and agility? The Gibson Girl and the Duchess of Towers,—these are the new women; and they represent a noble type, indeed. The heroines of romance and drama to-day are of a different sort from the Evelinas and Arabellas of the last century. Not only do they look differently, they behave differently. The false sentimentality, the false delicacy, the false modesty, the utter falseness of elaborate compliment and servile gallantry which went with the other falsehoods,—all these are disappearing. Women are growing honester, braver, stronger, more healthful and skillful and able and free, more human in all ways.

The change in education is in large part a cause of this, and progressively a consequence. Day by day the bars go down. More and more the field lies open for the mind of woman to glean all it can, and it has responded most eagerly. Not only our pupils, but our teachers, are mainly women. And the clearness and strength of the brain of the woman prove continually the injustice of the clamorous contempt long poured upon what was scornfully called "the female mind." There is no female mind. The brain is not an organ of sex. As well speak of a female liver.

Woman's progress in the arts and sciences, the trades and professions, is steady; but it is most unwise to claim from these relative advances the superiority of women to men, or even their equality, in these fields. What is more to the purpose and easily to be shown is the superiority of the women of to-day to those of earlier times, the immense new development of racial qualities in the sex. No modern proverbs, if we expressed ourselves in proverbs now, would speak with such sweeping, unbroken contumely of the women of to-day as did those unerring exhibitors of popular feeling in former times.

The popular thought of our day is voiced in fiction, fluent verse, and an incessant play of humor. By what is freely written by most authors and freely read by most people is shown our change in circumstances and change in feeling. In old romances the woman was nothing save beautiful, high-born, virtuous, and perhaps "accomplished." She did nothing but love and hate, obey or disobey, and be handed here and there among villain, hero, and outraged parent, screaming, fainting, or bursting into floods of tears as seemed called for by the occasion.

In the fiction of to-day women are continually taking larger place in the action of the story. They are given personal characteristics beyond those of physical beauty. And they are no longer content simply to *be:* they *do*. They are showing qualities of bravery, endurance, strength, foresight, and power for the swift execution of well - conceived plans. They have ideas and purposes of their own; and even when, as in so many cases described by the more reactionary novelists, the efforts of the heroine are shown to be entirely futile, and she comes back with a rush to the self-effacement of marriage with economic dependence, still the efforts were there. Disapprove as he may, use his art to oppose and condemn as he may, the true novelist is forced to chronicle the distinctive features of his time; and no feature is more distinctive of this time than the increasing individualization of women. With lighter touch, but with equally unerring truth, the wit and humor of the day show the same development. The majority of our current jokes on women turn on their "newness," the advance.

No sociological change equal in importance to this clearly marked improvement of an entire sex has ever taken place in one century. Under it all, the *crux* of the whole matter, goes on the one great change, that of the economic relation. This follows perfectly natural lines. Just as the development of machinery constantly lowers the importance of mere brute strength of body and raises that of mental power and skill, so the pressure of industrial conditions demands an ever-higher specialization, and tends to break up that relic of the patriarchal age,—the family as an economic unit.

Women have been led under pressure of necessity into a most reluctant entrance upon fields of economic activity. The sluggish and greedy disposition bred of long ages of dependence has by no means welcomed the change. Most women still work only as they "have to," until they can marry and "be supported." Men, too, liking the power that goes with money, and the poor quality of gratitude and affection bought with it, resent and oppose the change; but all this disturbs very little the course of social progress.

A truer spirit is the increasing desire of young girls to be independent, to have a career of their own, at least for a while, and the growing objection of countless wives to the pitiful asking for money, to the beggary of their position. More and more do fathers give their daughters, and husbands their wives, a definite allowance,—a separate bank account,—something which they can play is all their own. The spirit of personal independence in the women of to-day is sure proof that a change has come.

For a while the introduction of machinery which took away from the home so many industries deprived woman of any importance as an economic factor; but presently she arose, and followed her lost wheel and loom to their new place, the mill. To-day there is hardly an industry in the land in which some women are not found. Everywhere throughout America are women workers outside the unpaid labor of the home, the last census giving three million of them. This is so patent a fact, and makes itself felt in so many ways by so many persons, that it is frequently and widely discussed. Without here going into its immediate advantages or disadvantages from an industrial point of view, it is merely instanced as an undeniable proof of the radical change in the economic position of women that is advancing upon us. She is assuming new relations from year to year before our eyes; but we, seeing all social facts from a personal point of view, have failed to appreciate the nature of the change...

Charlotte Perkins Stetson (Gilman), Women and Economics (Boston: Small, Maynard, and Co., 1898; reprinted by Harper and Row, New York, 1966), pp. 148-153

REBEL GIRLS: WORKING-CLASS WOMEN

A. Objectives

1. To examine the issues which separated working-class women's interests from those of middle-class women.

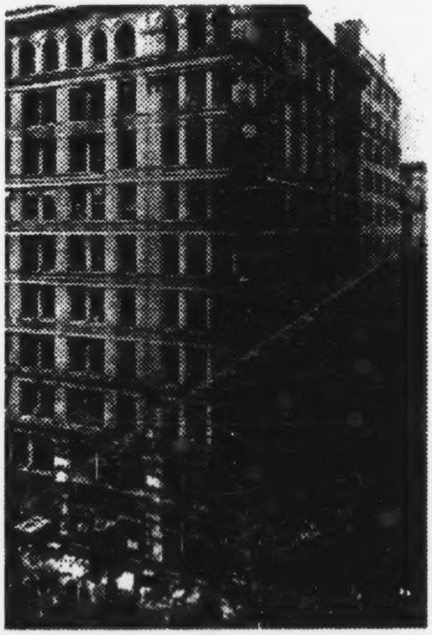
2. To identify stereotypes of working-class women and actions taken by working-class women to dispel them.

3. To identify the actions taken by working-class women in the labor struggle.

4. To identify the significance of such events as the Triangle Shirtwaist Company fire in establishing a historical context for the demands of women for anti-sweatshop legislation, for the eight hour day, and for safety legislation in manufacturing plants.

5. To understand the rise of the socialist movement during the Progressive era.

B. Teacher Background Materials



Exterior view of the building housing the Triangle Shirtwaist Co.; Greene Street and Washington Square. Reprinted courtesy of The Bettman Archives.

The Triangle Shirtwaist Company fire began in New York shortly before closing time, on March 25, 1911. It was a tragic event which claimed the lives of 146 of its 500 workers, the majority women. Hundreds were injured. A month earlier a massive shirtwaist strike, supported by two of the largest women's unions, the Women's Trade Union League (WTUL) and the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU), had been called off when employers and striking workers reached an impasse. One of the demands not met was for adequate fire escapes and open doors in the dangerously over-crowded sweatshop workrooms. Although many operators installed fire alarms, foremen routinely locked doors for fear that women would sneak out for breaks. The workrooms were firetraps, they were not adequately ventilated so that the air, thick with lint, was itself flammable. The scene at the Triangle Waist Company fire was described as a holocaust. Trapped women jumped to their deaths from the tenth story windows; the fire escape let down onto an iron spike fence, impaling the women who attempted to jump to the ground. As victims' bodies were brought out of the burning building they were laid out in rows where newspaper photographers recorded the chilling scenes.

C. Lesson Activities

1. The Triangle Shirtwaist Company fire (one day)

    a. As a class have students read **Documents J-1** and **J-2**, the responses to the Triangle Shirtwaist Company fire. Use a Reader's Theater format, with each student/actor reading a passage while standing.

    b. Have students assume the role of journalists and write a brief editorial in which they express a point-of-view and describe the significance of the event based upon their observations of the Reader's Theatre.

2. Working-and middle-class women's views of each other (one day)

    a. Divide the class into six groups and distribute **Documents K-1 through K-6**, one document to each group. Have everyone read their document and then discuss it in their group, making sure that they identify the author's social position.

    b. Have each group share with the class how their document's author perceives him or herself, as well as how that author sees women of other classes. List on the board the responses of student groups to see if some generalizations can be made about the attitudes of different social classes.

3. Protective labor legislation and the Constitution (two days)

   a. Write the last sentence of Section One to the 14th Amendment of the Constitution on the board. Discuss with the class what it means that no state is allowed to "deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

   b. Divide the class into three groups and assign to each **Documents L-1, L-2,** and **L-3** respectively. Students will read their assigned document and prepare to argue both the pros and cons of the legislation. Also have students prepare arguments both for and against the constitutionality of the Oregon decision.

   c. Conclude the exercise with a class discussion of the implications of protective legislation. Does it impede progress toward true equality? Is gender blindness in the legal system desirable, or should it recognize differences between men and women? Divide the board in two and list the costs and benefits of protective legislation on each side.

D. Additional Teacher's Background for Documents J-1 through K-7

a. **Document J-1**— In "Ruth Cohen's Horrifying Experience in the Triangle Shirtwaist Company Fire," a young female factory worker describes the scene of chaos and tragedy inside the Triangle building.

b. **Document J-2**— Rose Schneiderman, a cap maker, was a leader of the WTUL. She delivered a speech at the memorial meeting held for the victims of the Triangle Shirtwaist Company fire a week following the tragedy. Her speech reveals the bitterness that divided working-class women from their middle-class reformers.

c. **Document K-1**— The anonymous author of "Testimony of an African American Nurse" describes the harsh conditions faced by black female domestic workers.

d. **Document K-2**— "A Letter from a New New Yorker" appeared in the WTUL's newspaper Life and Labor. Stereotypes of women included the belief that they were less moral than middle-class women and that they preferred escapist and romantic literature to the more intellectual interests of non-wage earning women.

e. **Document K-3**— "A Nine-Hour Day for Domestic Servants" by Inez Goldman from The Independent points out that the protective feelings of the "allies" toward young female workers do not extend to their own domestic servants and illustrates why most working-class women preferred to work in industry.

f. **Document K-4**— Songs were a common and effective means of creating solidarity among workers. "The Maids' Defiance" was a song sung by domestic servants in Colorado who organized for higher wages in the face of opposition from women employers, the YWCA, and employment bureaus which exploited the labor of domestic workers.

g. **Document K-5**— "After the Strike" by Mary O'Reilly describes the solidarity and sense of accomplishment achieved when 30,000 workers responded to the tiny waistmakers' local of the ILGWU call for a strike against New York City shirtwaist makers in 1909. Already on strike at the time were the workers at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company.

h. **Document K-6**— "Bread and Roses," by James Oppenheim was written for the women of the Lawrence strike. The Lawrence strike began when workers protested a pay cut of thirty cents a week, after owners cut every worker's pay by two hours in response to new labor legislation limiting women and children to a 54 hour week. Twenty-thousand workers walked off the job in sub-zero weather when they discovered the pay cut in their pay envelopes on January 12, 1912.

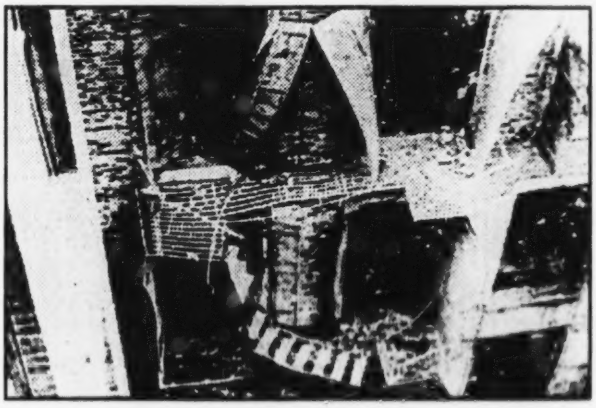
ROSE COHEN'S HORRIFYING EXPERIENCE IN THE TRIANGLE SHIRTWAIST COMPANY FIRE

"I ran into the dressing room with the machinist and some of the others. The walls of the dressing room began to smoke. We ran back into the shop. Girls were lying on the floor-fainted. People were stepping on them. Other girls were trying to climb over the machines. Some were running with their hair burning.

"I followed the machinist to a window and he smashed the glass with his hand to let the smoke out-it was choking us. Instead the flames rushed in. For a few seconds I stood at that window. My hair was smoldering. My clothes were torn. I turned and ran to the Greene Street exit.

"I put my hands on my smoldering, long hair and I started up the stairs. On the tenth floor, I went in through the door. The place was empty. All I could hear was the fire burning. Here, I thought, I would die-here was the end. I didn't realize that right above me-one more floor-was the roof.

"Then I heard some one calling, 'Come to the roof! Come to the roof!' I turned and saw him in a corner near the staircase holding an armful of record books. If not for him I would have died there on the tenth floor. My life was saved by a bookkeeper.


The fire escape death trap, Triangle Shirtwaist Factory.

"There was one little girl who, like me saved herself by running to the roof. She had wrapped white goods all around herself and one piece was still burning. I ran to her and helped her beat out the flames. Then I tried to hold back another girl who tore herself from us and ran back into the stairway to look for her sister."

In Leon Stein, The Triangle Fire (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, Inc.), p. 60-61.

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT J-2

ROSE SCHNEIDERMAN REACTS TO TRIANGLE FIRE

I would be a traitor to those poor burned bodies if I came here to talk good fellowship. We have tried you good people of the public and we have found you wanting. The old Inquisition had its rack and its thumbscrews and its instruments of torture with iron teeth. We know what these things are today: the iron teeth are our necessities, the thumbscrews the high-powered and swift machinery close to which we must work, and the rack is here in the "fire-proof" structures that will destroy us the minute they catch on fire.

This is not the first time girls have been burned alive in this city. Every week I must learn of the untimely death of one of my sister workers. Every year thousands of us are maimed. The life of men and women is so cheap and property is sacred. There are so many of us for one job it matters little if 143 of us are burned to death.

We have tried you, citizens; we are trying you now, and you have a couple of dollars for the sorrowing mothers and daughters and sisters by way of a charity gift. But every time the workers come out in the only way they know to protest against conditions which are unbearable, the strong hand of the law is allowed to press down heavily upon us.... I can't talk of fellowship to you who are gathered here. Too much blood has been spilled. I know from my experience it is up to the working people to save themselves....by a strong working-class movement.

Rose Schneiderman and Lucy Goldthwaite, All For One (New York: Paul Eriksson, Inc., 1967), pp.100-101

R.S. 1912

TESTIMONY OF AN AFRICAN AMERICAN NURSE

I am a negro woman, and I was born and reared in the South. I am now past forty years of age and am the mother of three children. My husband died nearly fifteen years ago, after we had been married about five years. For more than thirty years—or since I was ten years old—I have been a servant in one capacity or another in white families in a thriving Southern city, which has at present a population of more than 50,000. In my early years I was at first what might be called a "house-girl" or better, a "house-boy." I used to answer the doorbell, sweep the yard, go on errands, and do odd jobs. Later on I became a chambermaid and performed the usual duties of such a servant in a home. Still later, I was graduated into a cook, in which position I served at different times for nearly eight years in all. During the last ten years I have been a nurse. I have worked for only four different families during all these thirty years. But, belonging to the servant class, which is the majority class among my race at the South, and associating only with servants, I have been able to become intimately acquainted not only with the lives of hundreds of household servants, but also with the lives of their employers. I can, therefore, speak with authority on the so-called servant question; and what I say is said out of an experience which covers many years.

To begin with, then, I should say that more than two-thirds of the negroes of the town where I live are menial servants of one kind or another, and besides that more than two-thirds of the negro women here, whether married or single, are compelled to work for a living,—as nurses, cooks, washerwomen, chambermaids, seamstresses, hucksters, janitresses, and the like. I will say, also, that the condition of this vast host of poor colored people is just as bad as, if not worse than, it was during the days of slavery. Though today we are enjoying nominal freedom, we are literally slaves. And, not to generalize, I will give you a sketch of the work I have to do—and I'm only one of many.

I frequently work from fourteen to sixteen hours a day. I am compelled by my contract, which is oral only, to sleep in the house. I am allowed to go home to my own children, the oldest of whom is a girl of 18 years, only once in two weeks, every other Sunday afternoon—even then I'm not permitted to stay all night. I not only have to nurse a little white child, now eleven months old, but I have to act as playmate or "handy-andy", not say governess, to three other children in the home, the oldest of whom is only nine years of age. I wash and dress the baby two or three times each day; I give it its meals, mainly from a bottle; I have to put it to bed each night; and, in addition, I have to get up and attend to its every call between midnight and morning. If the baby falls to sleep during the day, as it has been trained to do every day about eleven o'clock, I am not permitted to rest. It's "Mammy, do this," or "Mammy, do that," or "Mammy, do the other," from my mistress, all the time. So it is not strange to see "Mammy" watering the lawn in front with the garden hose, sweeping the sidewalk, mopping the porch and halls, dusting around the house, helping the cook, or darning stockings. Not only so, but I have to put the other three children to bed each night as well as the baby, and I have to wash them and dress them each morning. I don't know what it is to go to church; I don't know what it is to go to a lecture or entertainment or anything of the kind; I live a treadmill life; and I see my own children only when they happen to see me on the streets when I am out with the children, or when my children come to the "yard" to see me, which isn't often, because my white folks don't like to see their servants' children hanging around their premises. You might as well say that I'm on duty all the time—from sunrise to sunrise, every day of the week. I am the slave, body and soul, of this family. And what do I get for this work—this lifetime bondage? The pitiful sum of ten dollars a month! And what am I expected to do with these ten dollars? With this money I'm expected to pay my house rent, which is four dollars per month, for a little house of two rooms, just big enough to turn round in; and I'm expected, also to feed and clothe myself and three children. For two years my oldest child, it is true, has helped a little toward our support by taking in a little washing at home. She does the washing and ironing of two white families, with a total of five persons; one of these families pays her $1.00 per week, and the other 75 cents per week, and my daughter has to furnish her own soap and starch and wood. For six months my youngest child, a girl about thirteen years old, has been nursing, and she receives $1.50 per week but has no night work. When I think of the low rate of wages we poor colored people receive, and when I hear so much said about our unreliability, our untrustworthiness, and even our vices, I recall the story of the private soldier in a certain army who once upon a time, being upbraided by the commanding officer because the heels of his shoes were not polished, is said to have replied: "Captain, do you expect all the virtues for $13 per month?"

Of course, nothing is being done to increase our wages, and the way things are going at present it would seem that nothing could be done to cause an increase in wages. We have no labor unions or organizations of any kind that could demand for us a uniform scale of wages for cooks, washerwomen, nurses, and the like; and, for another thing, if some negroes did here and there refuse to work for seven and eight and ten dollars a month, there would be hundreds of other negroes right on the spot ready to take their places and do the same work, or more, for the low wages that had been refused. So that, the truth is, we have to work for little or nothing or become vagrants! And that, of course, of course, in this State would mean that we would be arrested, tried, and despatched to the "State Farm," where we would surely have to work for nothing or be beaten with many stripes!. . .

Another thing—it's a small indignity, it may be, but an indignity just the same. No white person, not even the little children just learning to talk, no white person at the South ever thinks of addressing any negro man or woman as Mr., or Mrs., or Miss. The women are called, "Cook," or "Nurse," or "Mammy," or "Mary Jane," or "Lou," or "Dilcey," as the case may be, and the men are called" Bob," or "Boy," or "Old Man," or "Uncle Bill," or "Pate." In many cases our white employers refer to us, an in our presence, too, as their "niggers." No matter what they call us—no matter what they teach their children to call us—we must tamely submit, and answer when we are called; we must enter no protest; if we did object, we should be driven out without the least ceremony, and in applying for work at other places, we should find it very hard to procure another situation. In almost every case, when our intending employers would be looking up our record, the information would be given by telephone or otherwise that we were "impudent," "saucy," "dishonest," and "generally unreliable." In our town we have no such thing as an employment agency or intelligence bureau, and, therefore, when we want work, we have to get out on the street and go from place to place, always with hat in hand, hunting for it. . . .

Anonymous, "More Slavery at the South," ***The Independent*** *72 (Jan. 25, 1912) pp.196-199*

"LETTER FROM A NEW NEW YORKER"

At our League meetings every time we are asked to write to you and tell you what we think of Life and Labor, and that is why I write to you to-day. I am a Jewish girl, and I like Life and Labor; but the girls in our factory are not interested in Life and Labor, and I will tell you why. They do not know much—they have not much learning; they cannot do much thinking after the day's work, and no one can do any thinking "speeding up" at a machine, and only when they see something written by someone they know, like Pauline Newman, will they take the trouble to read it. What they need is stories, but stories that will stir them.

I do not know if I can tell you in English, but I will try, to tell you why I think the stories of Life and Labor do not mean much to the Jewish girls. You see, they are all **pleasant stories**, and we Jewish people have suffered too much to like just "pleasant stories." We want stories that tell of struggle, and that tell of people who want justice—passionately. You see, with the people in your pleasant stories we have no fellowship. They do not seem real.

Last night I was with some of our factory girls, and they begged me for a story and I told them the story of Jean Valjean, and they all listened eagerly, and when I finished they said, "So long, so long have men and women struggled for justice and it is not here yet. We, too, must struggle," and so they went on with more courage in their hearts for the struggle, and then I thought why not have Life and Labor give us the story of Jean Valjean, so that we may all take heart and new courage.

A New New Yorker

Anonymous, "Stories Too Pleasant," Life and Labor Vol.I, n.12, (Dec. 1911), pp. 384

A NINE-HOUR DAY FOR DOMESTIC SERVANTS

…A friend called on me not long since, requesting my signature to a petition which urged the merchants to place seats behind counters for the use of female clerks.

"The girls," she said, "have to stand on their feet ten hours a day and it makes my heart ache to see their tired faces."

"Mrs. Jones," said I, "how many hours a day does your maid stand upon her feet?"

"Why, I don't know," she gasped; "five or six, I suppose."

"At what time does she rise?"

"Oh, about eight, I think generally."

"That makes fourteen hours. What time does she have during the day to sit down?"

"Why, she has time to rest in the afternoon"

"How long?"

"I think about an hour, sometimes more."

"Does she have this hour on wash and ironing days?"

"No-o, I suppose not, but she can often sit down at her work."

"At what work? Washing? Ironing? Sweeping? Making beds? Cooking? Washing dishes?"

"Of course not, but she can sit while preparing vegetables and eating her meals." I assented to this.

"Perhaps she sits for two hours at her meals and preparing vegetables, and four days in the week she has an hour in the afternoon. According to that, your maid is on her feet at least eleven hours a day with a score of stair climbings included. It seems to me that her case is more pitiable than that of the store clerk."

My caller rose with red cheeks and flashing eyes. "My maid always has Sunday after dinner," she said.

"Yes, but the clerk has all day Sunday. Please don't go until I have signed that petition. No one would be more thankful than I to see the clerks have a chance to sit."…

Inez Goldman, "A Nine Hour Day for Domestic Servants," ***The Independent***

"THE MAIDS' DEFIANCE"

We've answered all your door bells and we've washed your dirty kids,
For lo, these many weary years we've done as we were bid,
But we're going to fight for freedom and for our rights we'll stand.
And we're going to stick together in one big Union band.

chorus
It's a long day for housemaid Mary, it's a long day's hard to toil.
It's a burden too hard to carry, so our mistresses' schemes we'll foil.
For we're out for a shorter day this summer
Or we'll fix old Denver town.

We've washed your dirty linen and we've cooked your daily foods;
We've eaten in your kitchens, and we've stood your ugly moods.
But now we've joined the Union and organized to stay,
The cooks and maids and chauffeurs, in one grand array.

chorus
It's a long day for housemaid Mary, it's a long day's hard to toil.
It's a burden too hard to carry, so our mistresses' schemes we'll foil.
For we're out for a shorter day this summer
Or we'll fix old Denver town.

Song sung by domestic servats in Colorado circa 1910.

MARY O'REILLY, "AFTER THE STRIKE" (1910)

A lull in the struggle,
a truce in the fight,
The whirr of machines
And the dearly bought right,
Just to labor for bread,
Just to work and be fed.

For this we have marched
Through the snow-covered street,
Have borne our dead comrades
While muffled drums beat.
For this we have fought,
For this boon dearly-bought.

We measure our gain
By the price we have paid.
Call the victory great
As the struggle we made;
For we struggled to grow,
And we won. And we know.

Ah, we know, as we hear
Once again the loud hum
Of machines all in motion,
Commanding we come
In our newly-won powers,
To this labor of ours.

Together we suffered
The weary weeks past,
Together we won and
Together at last
As we learn our own might,
We will win the great fight.

Song written for the 1909 ILGWU strike against the New York City shirtwaist makers.

JAMES OPPENHEIM, "BREAD AND ROSES" (1912)

As we come marching, marching in the beauty of the day,
A million darkened kitchens, a thousand mill lofts gray,
Are touched with all the radiance that a sudden sun discloses,
For the people hear us singing "Bread and roses! Bread and roses!"

As we come marching, marching, we battle too for men,
For they are women's children, and we mother them again.
Our lives shall not be sweated from birth until life closes;
Hearts starve as well as bodies; give us bread, but give us roses!

As we come marching, marching, unnumbered women dead
Go crying through our singing their ancient cry for bread.
Small art and love and beauty their drudging spirits knew.
Yes, it is bread we fight for—but we fight for roses, too!

As we come marching, marching, we bring the greater days.
The rising of the women means the rising of the race.
No more the drudge and idler—ten that toil where one reposes,
But sharing of life's glories: Bread and roses! Bread and roses!

Reprinted in Edith Fowke and Joe Glazer, eds., Songs of Work and Protest *(New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1973), pp. 70-71.*

LOUIS BRANDEIS' "BRIEF FOR THE STATE OF OREGON," 1908

I. The Dangers of Long Hours

A. Causes

(1) Physical Differences Between Men and Women

The dangers of long hours for women arise from their special physical organization taken in connection with the strain incident to factory and similar work.

Long hours of labor are dangerous for women primarily because of their special physical organization. In structure and function women are differentiated from men. Besides these anatomical and physiological differences, physicians are agreed that women are fundamentally weaker than men in all that makes for endurance: in muscular strength, in nervous energy, in the powers of persistent attention and application. Overwork, therefore, which strains endurance to the utmost, is more disastrous to the health of women than of men, and entails upon them more lasting injury....

B. Bad Effect of Long Hours on Health

The fatigue which follows long hours of labor becomes chronic and results in general deterioration of health. Often ignored, since it does not result in immediate disease, this weakness and anemia undermines the whole system; it destroys the nervous energy most necessary for steady work, and effectually predisposes to other illness. The long hours of standing, which are required in many industries, are universally denounced by physicians as the cause of pelvic disorders....

C. Bad Effect of Long Hours on Safety

Accidents to working women occur most frequently at the close of the day, or after a long period of uninterrupted work. The coincidence of casualties and fatigue due to long hours is thus made manifest....

D. Bad Effect of Long Hours on Morals

The effect of overwork on morals is closely related to the injury to health. Laxity of moral fibre follows physical debility. When the working day is so long that no time whatever is left for a minimum of leisure or home-life, relief from the strain of work is sought in alcoholic stimulants and other excesses....

E. Bad Effect of Long Hours on General Welfare

The experience of manufacturing countries has illustrated the evil effect of overwork upon the general welfare. Deterioration of any large portion of the population inevitably lowers the entire community physically, mentally, and morally. When the health of women has been injured by long hours, not only is the working efficiency of the community impaired, but the deterioration is handed down to succeeding generations. Infant mortality rises, while the children of married working-women, who survive, are injured by inevitable neglect. The overwork of future mothers thus directly attacks the welfare of the nation....

VI. The Reasonableness of the Ten-Hour Day

Factory inspectors, physicians, and working women are unanimous in advocating the ten-hour day, wherever it has not yet been established. Some indeed consider ten hours too long a period of labor; but as opposed to the unregulated or longer day, there is agreement that ten hours is the maximum number of working hours compatible with health and efficiency....

Conclusion

We submit that in view of the facts above set forth and of legislative action extending over a period of more than sixty years in the leading countries of Europe, and in twenty of our States, it cannot be said that the Legislature of Oregon had no reasonable ground for believing that the public health, safety, or welfare did not require a legal limitation on women's work in manufacturing and mechanical establishments and laundries to ten hours in one day.

Excerpted from Louis D. Brandeis, "Brief for the State of Oregon" in ***Women in Industry*** *(New York: Reprinted for the National Consumers' League, 1908) pp. 18, 28, 42, 44, 47, 92, 113.*

JUSTICE DAVID J. BREWER AFFIRMS THE OREGON LAW, 1908

Curt Muller, Plff. in Err. (*sic.; plaintiff in error*), v. *State of Oregon.*

Constitutional law—regulating hours of women employees.

Rights under the 14th Amendment to the Federal Constitution are not infringed by the limitation of the hours of labor of women employed in laundries to ten hours daily as made by Oregon Laws 1903, p 148, although like legislation affecting male employees may be invalid....

That woman's physical structure and the performance of maternal functions place her at a disadvantage in the struggle for subsistence is obvious. This is especially true when the burdens of motherhood are upon her. Even when they are not, by abundant testimony of the medical fraternity continuance for a long time on her feet at work, repeating this from day to day, tends to injurious effects upon the body, and, as healthy mothers are essential to vigorous offspring, the physical well-being of woman becomes an object of public interest and care in order to preserve the strength and vigor of the race....

Though limitations upon personal and contractual rights may be removed by legislation, there is that in her disposition and habits of life which will operate against a full assertion of those rights. She will still be where some legislation to protect her seems necessary to secure a real equality of right. Doubtless there are individual exceptions, and there are many respects in which she has an advantage over him; but looking at it from the viewpoint of the effort to maintain an independent position in life, she is not upon an equality. Differentiated by these matters from the other sex, she is properly placed in a class by herself, and legislation designed for her protection may be sustained, even when like legislation is not necessary for men, and could not be sustained.... The limitations which this statute places upon her contractual powers, upon her right to agree with her employer as to the time she shall labor, are not imposed solely for her benefit, but also largely for the benefit of all. Many words cannot make this plainer. The two sexes differ in structure of body, in the functions to be performed by each, in the amount of physical strength, in the capacity for long-continued labor, particularly when done standing, the influence of vigorous health upon the future well-being of the race, the self-reliance which enables one to assert full rights, and in the capacity to maintain the struggle for subsistence. This difference justifies a difference in legislation, and upholds that which is designed to compensate for some of the burdens which rest upon her.

We have not referred in this discussion to the denial of the elective franchise in the state of Oregon, for while that may disclose a lack of political equality in all things with her brother, that is not of itself decisive. The reason runs deeper, and rests in the inherent difference between the two sexes, and in the different functions in life which they perform.

For these reasons, and without questioning in any respect the decision in Lochner v. New York, we are of the opinion that it cannot be adjudged that the act in question is in conflict with the Federal Constitution, so far as it respects the work of a female in a laundry, and the judgment of the Supreme Court of Oregon is affirmed.

Justice David J. Brewer Affirms the Oregon Law, 1908 Muller v. Oregon, Supreme Court, United States Reports, 208 U.S. 412 (1908).

DORR CONFIRMS THE NATIONAL CONSUMERS' LEAGUE ROLE IN THE MULLER CASE, 1908

...The case was appealed, and appealed again, by the laundrymen, and finally reached the Supreme Court.... Then the Consumers' League took a hand.

The brief for the State of Oregon...was prepared by Louis S. Brandeis, of Boston, assisted by Josephine Goldmark, one of the most effective workers in the League's New York Headquarters. This brief is probably one of the most remarkable legal documents in existence. It consists of one hundred and twelve printed pages, of which a few paragraphs were written by the attorney for the State. All the rest was contributed, under Miss Goldmark's direction, from the Consumers' League's wonderful collection of reasons why women workers should be protected.... The Consumers' League convinced the Supreme Court of the United States, and the Oregon ten-hour law was upheld....

Waitresses' Union, Local No. 484, of Chicago, led by a remarkable young working woman, Elizabeth Maloney...drafted, and introduced into the Illinois Legislature, a bill providing an eight-hour working day for every woman in the State... The "Girls' Bill," as it immediately became known, was the most hotly contested measure passed by the Illinois Legislature during the session. Over 500 manufacturers appeared at the public hearing on the bill...presenting the business aspect of the question; the girls showed the human side....

"I am a waitress," said Miss Mahoney, "and I work ten hours a day. In that time a waitress who is tolerably busy *walks* ten miles, and the dishes she carries back and forth aggregate in weight 1,500 to 2,000 pounds. Don't you think eight hours a day is enough for a girl to walk?"

Only one thing stood in the way of the passage of the bill after that day. The doubt of its constitutionality proved an obstacle too grave for the friends of the workers to overcome. It was decided to substitute a ten-hour bill, an exact duplicate of the "Oregon Standard" established by the Supreme Court of the United States. The principle of limitation upon the hours of women's work once established in Illinois, the workers could proceed with their fight for an eight-hour day....

Rheta Childe Dorr, "Women's Demand for Humane Treatment of Women Workers in Shop and Factory" (New York: Consumers's League of the City of New York, 1909), reprinted from ***Harper's Magazine*** *(December 1909).*

MARGARET SANGER AND THE BIRTH CONTROL MOVEMENT

A. Objectives

1. To examine the relationship between birth control and women's overall empowerment.
2. To study Margaret Sanger's central role in the birth control movement.
3. To study the birth control movement in African American communities.
4. To examine the links between birth control and labor issues as seen in the speeches of Emma Goldman.
5. To examine the differences between middle-class and working-class women in regards to birth control.

B. Teacher Background Materials

At the center of the movement for female autonomy was the issue of reproductive rights, or "birth control" to use a phrase coined by Margaret Sanger, a housewife, trained nurse, and mother of three who turned radical activist. In 1921 she founded the American Birth Control League, which later became the Planned Parenthood Federation of America (1942).

Sanger's mother died when she was forty-nine, weakened by a long battle with tuberculosis and by raising eleven children on a meager income. Sanger's father lived past eighty. This contrast between Sanger's parents' fates likely played a significant role in her ambition to win reproductive rights for women.

Margaret Sanger poised by bookshelf, 1916.

Reprinted courtesy of The Bettman Archives

"Birth control," a phrase coined by Margaret Sanger, was a centerpiece in Progressive women's movement for female autonomy. The birth control movement, however, had a history of its own. Like other reform programs of the Progressive era which focused on the rights of individuals, the movement for reproductive rights had its roots in temperance, moral reform, abolitionism, left-wing Protestantism, utopian radicalism, social purity and eugenics. "Social purity" was the name given to moral reforms aimed at eliminating the double sexual standard of morality which limited female sexual expression to marital sex while at the same time allowed a much wider scope of male sexuality. It sought not to widen women's sexual expression beyond marital relations but instead to enhance it by limiting men's extramarital sexual activity and spiritualizing women's sexual expression within the marriage. These reforms were widely supported by Protestant clergy and Christian women's organizations such as the WCTU.

Social purity workers joined forces with suffragists who insisted that women should have more control over marital sexuality. They sought to maintain women's traditional maternal authority by insisting on maintaining and preserving the link between sexuality and reproduction. However, their demands for a "voluntary motherhood," which was supported by women's rights leaders such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton who spoke about "the gospel of fewer children and a healthy, happy maternity," opened the door toward the acceptance of contraception and the realization that contraception would force a separation between sexuality and reproduction.

By the late nineteenth century more and more women left the domestic sphere. Declining birth rates showed that maternity was less central to women's lives. For middle-class married women, sexuality became increasingly a privatized rather than a communal concern and romantic intimacy played a larger role than reproduction in sexual relations. Meanwhile, a younger generation of women who were living apart from their families were exploring new sexual relations beyond marital settings. Young women working in factories, offices and department stores in the cities were attracted to a nighttime world of commercialized pleasure in dance halls and amusement centers and openly mocked middle-class sexual ideals which held little relevance for their lives.

Eugenics, a science which deals with the improvement of a race or breed through inherited characteristics, grew out of the merging of taxonomic practices of physiognomy and phrenology (which attempted to generalize and categorize facial features and shapes and sizes of skulls which were believed to reveal outward signs of inner character) and the new mathematical science of statistics, which sought to mathematically establish the "average man." Eugenics was popularized first among criminologists who published photographic catalogs of criminals and criminal "types" and later eagerly seized upon by social reformers, including Stanton and feminist social scientist Lester Ward, and later Charlotte Perkins Gilman, on the grounds that autonomous women who controlled their reproduction would select mates more wisely and therefore produce healthier, physically stronger, and morally superior children. The practice of negative eugenics—eliminating undesirable inherited traits, was also used by social reformers, including Sanger, to play on nativist and middle-class fears of immigrants and the poor. Sanger often characterized the goal of birth control as "more children from the fit, less from the unfit." Eugenics was an important element in the birth control movement as well as in the "race suicide" counter-movement, a position held by President Theodore Roosevelt who branded women who avoided having children as "criminals against the race...the object of contemptuous abhorrence by healthy people."

The birth control movement, then, by the early twentieth century, was a widespread movement with popular support in both the middle-class and the working-class. Sanger's appearance in the movement occurred at a turning point of the movement and her considerable skills as an orator, organizer and fund-raiser made her the undisputed leader of the movement.

In 1910, Sanger joined the ranks of radical activists and opened her home to lively gatherings of New York City's leading radicals, including Bill Haywood of the International Workers of the World (IWW), the journalist John Reed, and agitators Alexander Berkman, Benjamin Reitman, Emma Goldman and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn. She worked as a home nurse on the Lower East Side and played a critical role in the evacuation and care of women and children during the 1912 Lawrence, Massachusetts strike. She was appalled by the misery she encountered among working-class women who bore one child after another, and used her training and ambition to make contraceptives available to all women.

In 1912 she began a series of articles on female sexuality for a socialist newspaper, the New York Call. Thus began a series of confrontations between Sanger and government officials who seized the paper under the Comstock anti-obscenity laws. To avoid arrest, she sailed to Europe where she undertook a fact-finding mission on birth control. Upon her return, she published her own magazine, The Woman Rebel, and made female autonomy, including the right to control reproduction and sexual expression, the main focus of the magazine. She managed to elude postal inspectors until she was arrested for distributing her pamphlet, Family Limitation. Faced with nine counts of violating the law that carried a 45-year sentence, she fled to Europe in October 1914. She left behind the pamphlet which provided the most comprehensive information on contraceptives available in the United States including instructions for their use.

In New York, liberals and socialists gathered support for birth control, and liberals who did not support Sanger's tactics organized the National Birth Control League. Sanger's more radical supporters included the labor agitator Emma Goldman who began to incorporate the subject of birth control into her public lectures. Goldman was in New York where Sanger delivered an impassioned speech on birth control (see **Document M**). By early 1915, activists had distributed thousands of copies of Sanger's pamphlet, Family Limitation, and formed birth control leagues all over the country.

Returning to the U.S. in 1915, Sanger embarked on a national speaking tour and in October 1916 defied the law again when she opened a birth control clinic in a working-class neighborhood in Brooklyn. The clinic was staffed by Sanger and her younger sister, Ethel Byrne, and was closed down by police after ten days during which 488 Brooklyn mothers were provided with contraceptive advice. Her trial opened the way for an important clarification of an 1873 statute which allowed doctors to prescribe condoms for the prevention of venereal disease, but which lacked language relating to women who, as Sanger argued, were forced to risk death in pregnancy against their will. The law was modified to allow doctors to provide women with contraceptive advice for "the cure and prevention of disease." This marked an important transition in the birth control movement. Sanger gradually severed her connections with her radical supporters, adopted eugenic arguments for birth control, and brought birth control under the control of doctor-staffed clinics.

C. Lesson Activities

Springboard Activity:

1. Using **DOCUMENTS M** and **N**, link the issue of birth control in the 1920s to that of abortion rights in the 1970s. As a class delineate the pro-choice and pro-life positions debated in the *Roe vs. Wade* decision. One way to do this might be to simulate the trial with one-third of the class acting as the Supreme Court and the remainder of the class divided into pro-life and pro-choice camps that present their case to the court. To conclude the discussion, have the class brainstorm how the issues or problems surrounding birth control have changed from the early 1900s to the present. Focus on how values have changed, the way in which the Bill of Rights might guarantee a right to privacy, and how the 14th Amendment guarantees legal rights to all persons.
    a. Using **DOCUMENT O**, excerpts from Emma Goldman's biography, have students do a timed reading. Then have them write in learning logs. They should divide their log into two columns—the left for information or facts, the right for their personal reactions or opinions.
    b. Using **DOCUMENT P**, Eugenics and Child Cul-

ture, and Q, Schrack's opinion regarding African American women, divide students into pairs with each member of a pair reading a different document. Have the students share with their partners what they learned from the document and what reactions they had to it. Students can then complete their learning log for a second document.

c. Simulate a television interview such as Meet the Press, Face the Nation, Nightline, or This Week with David Brinkley and conduct an interview on the topic "Birth Control and the Modern American Woman." Get student volunteers to assume the roles of Emma Goldman, Margaret Sanger, and Blanche Shrack on a panel of published experts. Have a moderator introduce each panelist, giving some brief introductory background. The remainder of the class will serve as the journalists from magazines and newspapers of the time such as The World, The Journal, McClure's, Harper's, and Collier's.

2. Alternate Format: Town Hall Meeting

   a. First have the moderator introduce each guest expert. After their introduction, the guests all give a brief summary of their position on the topic. Then the students will present three to six questions to the guests (one or two per guest), with the moderator mediating between the guests and the interviewers.

3. Based on the information in their learning logs and the interviews, students will write a one-page article for a newspaper or magazine of the period.

   a. Divide the students into small groups and have them read and evaluate each others articles. Ask students to be active in the evaluation process and make comments on the articles both positive and suggestions for improvement. Have each group select their favorite essay to read aloud to the class.

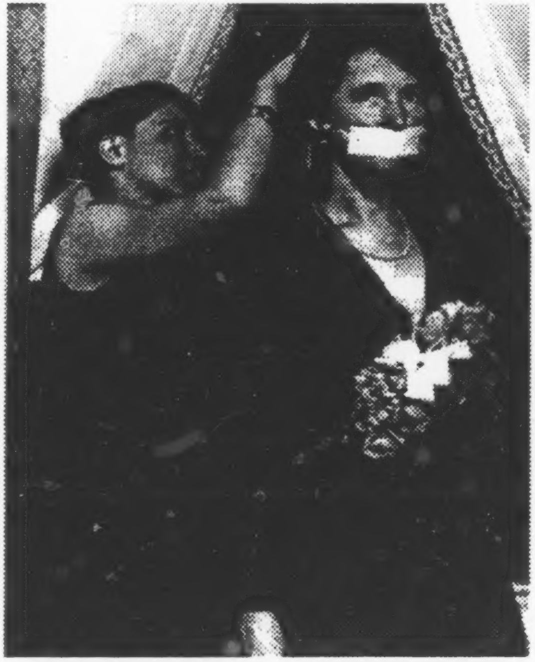
b. If possible, to enhance the forum arrange a guest speaker from a community organization to speak either before or after the role play.

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT M

SANGER'S IMPASSIONED DEFENSE OF BIRTH CONTROL

The most far-reaching social development of modern times is the revolt of woman against sex servitude. The most important force in the remaking of the world is a free motherhood. Besides this force, the elaborate international programmes of modern statesmen are weak and superficial. Diplomats may formulate leagues of nations and nations may pledge their utmost strength to maintain them, statesmen may dream of reconstructing the world out of alliances, hegemonies and spheres of influence, but woman, continuing to produce explosive populations, will convert these pledges into the proverbial scraps of paper; or she may, by controlling birth, lift motherhood to the plane of a voluntary, intelligent function, and remake the world. When the world is thus remade, it will exceed the dream of statesman, reformer, and revolutionist.

Margaret Sanger, Woman and the New Race (New York, Blue Ribbon Books, 1920), p.1.



4/17/29-Boston Closes Lips of Birth Control Adherent: *Leading iconoclasts of the nation will attend their annual banquet and frolic at the Ford Town Hall, Boston, Mass. A feature at the meeting will be the attendance of Mrs. Margaret Sanger, fresh from raid on New York clinic. Adhesive tape will seal her lips that they may not preach birth control while in Boston, Mass. But she will be permitted to write on blackboard. Miss Edythe S. Tichell applies the adhesive tape to lips of Sanger.*

Reprinted courtesy of The Bettman Archives.

JANE ROE, *et al.*
v.
HENRY WADE.

BACKGROUND FOR ROE V. WADE (1973)

■ *Background of the Case*

Jane Roe, a pseudonym, was an unmarried pregnant woman who brought suit against District Attorney Wade of Dallas County, Texas. Roe's suit challenged a Texas statute prohibiting abortions except when, in a doctor's judgment, abortion would be necessary to save the mother's life. Since Roe's life was not endangered by her pregnancy, she had not been able to obtain an abortion in Texas.

■ *Constitutional Issue*

Roe argued that the protection of life granted by the Fourteenth Amendment could not be applied to a fetus because a fetus was not a person in the eyes of the law. She also argued that her decision to obtain an abortion should be protected by the right of privacy, a right which stemmed from the Bill of Rights generally and from the liberty guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment.

■ *The Court's Decision*

In a 7 to 2 vote, the court decided in Roe's favor on both points, although with some qualifications. Justice Harry A. Blackmun wrote for the Court.

The Court approached its decision by acknowledging the delicacy and depth of the issue before it. Nevertheless, it was the Court's task "to resolve the issue by constitution measurement free of emotion and of predilection." It bore in mind Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes' noted dissent in *Lochner v. New York* (1905) that the Constitution "is made for people of fundamentally differing views, and the accident of our finding certain opinions natural and familiar or novel and even shocking ought not to conclude our judgment upon the question whether statutes embodying them conflict with the Constitution of the United States."

Justice Blackmun reaffirmed that there was a right to privacy that could be inferred from the First, Fourth, Fifth, Ninth, and Fourteenth Amendments. He said that "the right has some extension to activities relating to marriage..., procreation..., (and) contraception..." Accordingly, "the right of privacy...is broad enough to encompass a woman's decision whether or not to terminate her pregnancy," he concluded.

Although specific and direct medical injury might follow a denial of choice, other injuries as well could result from an unwanted pregnancy. These include "a distressful life and future," "psychological harm," and "also the distress...associated with the unwanted child, and...the problem of bringing a child into a family already unable, psychologically and otherwise, to care for it." Yet the Court granted no absolute right to an abortion, as that decision "must be considered against important state interests in regulation..."

The Court's discussion then turned to the question of fetal personhood. Although Wade had argued that a fetus was a person, he conceded that there was no case to be cited in support of his position. The Court, too, was persuaded that "the word *person*, as used in the Fourteenth Amendment, does not include the unborn...On this point, Blackmun explained, "the law has been reluctant to endorse any theory that life, as we recognize it, begins before live birth or to accord legal rights to the unborn except in narrowly defined situations and except when the rights are contingent upon live birth."

The state, in fact, was held to have two separate and distinct interests. According to the Court, one is "preserving and protecting the health of the pregnant woman...: and the other is "in protecting the potentiality of human life."

WESTLAW Summary

Action was brought for declaratory and injunctive relief respecting Texas criminal abortion laws which were claimed to be unconstitutional. A three-judge

United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas entered judgment declaring the laws to be unconstitutional and an appeal was taken. The Supreme Court held that the Texas criminal abortion statutes prohibiting abortions at any stage of a pregnancy except to save the life of the mother are unconstitutional; that prior to approximately the end of the first trimester the abortion decision and its effectuation must be left to the medical judgment of the pregnant woman's attending physician, subsequent to approximately the end of the first trimester the state may regulate the abortion procedure in ways reasonably related to maternal health, and at the stage subsequent to viability the state may regulate and even proscribe abortion except where necessary in appropriate medical judgment for the preservation of the life or health of the mother.

Case Excerpts

Mr. Justice BLACKMUN delivered the opinion of the Court.
This Texas federal appeal and its Georgia companion, Doe v. Bolton, present constitutional challenges to state criminal abortion legislation. The Texas statutes under attack here are typical of those that have been in effect in many States for approximately a century. The Georgia statutes, in contrast, have a modern cast and are a legislative product that, to an extent at least, obviously reflects the influences of recent attitudinal changes, of advancing medical knowledge and techniques, and of new thinking about an old issue.

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The Texas statutes that concern us here are Arts. 1191-1194 and 1196 of the State's Penal Code. These make it a crime to "procure an abortion,' as therein defined, or to attempt one, except with respect to "an abortion procured or attempted by medical advice for the purpose of saving the life of the mother.' Similar statutes are in existence in a majority of the States.

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Jane Roe, a single woman who was residing in Dallas County, Texas, instituted a federal action in March 1970 against the District Attorney of the county. She sought a declaratory judgment that the Texas criminal abortion statutes were unconstitutional on their face, and an injunction restraining the defendant from enforcing the statutes.

Roe alleged that she was unmarried and pregnant; that she wished to terminate her pregnancy by an abortion performed by a competent, licensed physician, under safe, clinical conditions; that she was unable to get a "legal" abortion in Texas because her life did not appear to be threatened by the continuation of her pregnancy; and that she could not afford to travel to another jurisdiction in order to secure a legal abortion under safe conditions. She claimed that the Texas statutes were unconstitutionally vague and that they abridged her right of personal privacy, protected by the First, Fourth, Fifth, Ninth, and Fourteenth Amendments. By an amendment to her complaint Roe purported to sue "on behalf of herself and all other women similarly situated."

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Viewing Roe's case as of the time of its filing and thereafter until as late as May, there can be little dispute that it then presented a case or controversy and that, wholly apart from the class aspects, she, as a pregnant single woman thwarted by the Texas criminal abortion laws, had standing to challenge those statutes.

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The principal thrust of appellant's attack on the Texas statutes is that they improperly invade a right, said to be possessed by the pregnant woman, to choose to terminate her pregnancy. Appellant would discover this right in the concept of personal "liberty' embodied in the Fourteenth Amendment's Due Process Clause; or in personal marital, familial, and sexual privacy said to be protected by the Bill of Rights.

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It has been argued occasionally that these laws were the product of a Victorian social concern to discourage illicit sexual conduct.

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A second reason is concerned with abortion as a medical procedure. When most criminal abortion laws were first enacted, the procedure was a hazardous one for the woman.

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Mortality rates for women undergoing early abortions, where the procedure is legal, appear to be as low as or lower than the rates for normal childbirth. Consequently, any interest of the State in protecting the woman from an inherently hazardous procedure, except when it would be equally for her to forgo it, has largely disappeared.

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The third reason is the State's interest-some phrase it in terms of duty-in protecting prenatal life. Some of the argument for this justification rests on the theory that a new human life is present from the moment of conception.

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The Constitution does not explicitly mention any right of privacy. In a line of decisions, however, the Court has recognized that a right of personal privacy, or a guarantee of certain areas or zones of privacy, does exist under the Constitution.

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This right of privacy, whether it be founded in the Fourteenth Amendment's concept of personal liberty and restrictions upon state action, as we feel it is, or, as the District Court determined, in the Ninth Amendment's reservation of rights to the people, is broad enough to encompass a woman's decision whether or not to terminate her pregnancy. The detriment that the State would impose upon the pregnant woman by denying this choice altogether is apparent. Specific and direct harm medically diagnosable even in early pregnancy may be involved. Maternity, or additional offspring, may force upon the woman a distressful life and future. Psychological harm may be imminent. Mental and physical health may be taxed by child care. There is also the distress, for all concerned, associated with the unwanted child, and there is the problem of bringing a child into a family already unable, psychologically and otherwise, to care for it. In other cases, as in this one, the additional difficulties and continuing stigma of unwed motherhood may be involved. All these are factors the woman and her responsible physician necessarily will consider in consultation.

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We repeat, however, that the State does have an important and legitimate interest in preserving and protecting the health of the pregnant woman, whether she be

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT N

a resident of the State or a nonresident who seeks medical consultation and treatment there, and that it has still another important and legitimate interest in protecting the potentiality of human life. These interests are separate and distinct. Each grows in substantiality as the woman approaches term and, at a point during pregnancy, each becomes "compelling."

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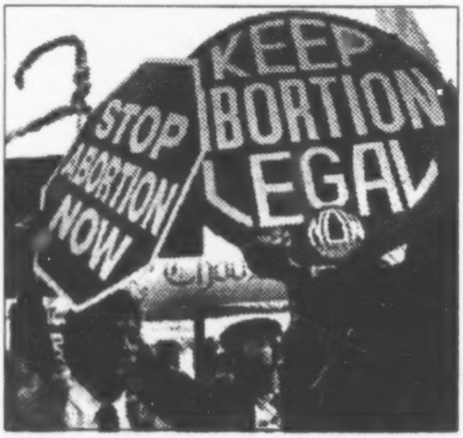
With respect to the State's important and legitimate interest in potential life, the "compelling" point is at viability. This is so because the fetus then presumably has the capability of meaningful life outside the mother's womb. State regulation protective of fetal life after viability thus has both logical and biological justifications. If the State is interested in protecting fetal life after viability, it may go so far as to proscribe abortion during that period, except when it is necessary to preserve the life or health of the mother.



***1/22/90-Washington: Both sides of the abortion** issue face off in front of the Supreme Court, marking the 17th anniversary of the Roe vs. Wade decision. Reprinted courtesy of The Bettman Archives.*

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Measured against these standards, Art. 1196 of the Texas Penal Code, in restricting legal abortions to those "procured or attempted by medical advice for the purpose of saving the life of the mother," sweeps too broadly. The statute makes no distinction between abortions performed early in pregnancy and those performed later, and it limits to a single reason, "saving" the mother's life, the legal justification for the procedure. The statute, therefore, cannot survive the constitutional attack made upon it here.

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Decision

Affirmed in part and reversed in part.

Source: 410 U.S. 113, 93 S. Ct. 705, 35 L.Ed.2d147

LIVING MY LIFE
Excerpts From Emma Goldman's Autobiography

After my return from the Neo-Malthusian Conference, held in Paris in 1900, I had added to my lecture series the subject of birth control. I did not discuss methods, because the question of limiting offspring represented in my estimation only one aspect of the social struggle and I did not care to risk arrest for it. Moreover, I was so continually on the brink of prison because of my general activities that it seemed unjustifiable to court extra trouble. Information on methods I gave only when privately requested for it. Margaret Sanger's difficulties with the postal authorities over her publication of *The Woman Rebel*, and the arrest of William Sanger for giving his wife's pamphlet on methods of birth-control to a Comstock agent, made me aware that the time had come when I must either stop lecturing on the subject or do it practical justice. I felt that I must share with them the consequences of the birth-control issue.

Neither my birth-control discussion nor Margaret Sanger's efforts were pioneer work. The trail was blazed in the United States by the grand old fighter Moses Harman, his daughter Lillian, Ezra Heywood, Dr. Foote and his son, E.C. Walker, and their collaborators of a previous generation. Ida Craddock, one of the bravest champions of women's emancipation, had paid the supreme price. Hounded by Comstock and faced with a five-year sentence, she had taken her own life. She and the Moses Harman group were the pioneers and heroes of the battle for free motherhood, for the right of the child to be born well. The matter of priority, however, in no way lessened the value of Margaret Sanger's work. She was the only woman in America in recent years to give information to women on birth-control and she had revived the subject in her publication after many years of silence.

E. C. Walker, president of the Sunrise Club, had invited me to speak at one of its fortnightly dinners. His organization was among the few libertarian forums in New York open to free expression. I had often lectured there on various social topics. On this occasion I chose birth-control as my theme, intending openly to discuss methods of contraception. I faced one of the largest audiences in the history of the club, numbering about six hundred persons, among them physicians, lawyers, artists, and men and women of liberal views. Most of them were earnest people who had come together to lend moral support to the test case that this first public discussion represented...

I introduced my subject by reviewing the historical and social aspects of birth-control and then continued with a discussion of a number of contraceptives, their application and effects. I spoke in the direct and frank manner that I should use in dealing with ordinary disinfection and prophylaxis. The questions and the discussion that followed showed that I had taken the right approach. Several physicians complimented me on having presented so difficult and delicate a subject in a "clean and natural manner."...

...My lectures and attempts at lecturing on birth-control finally resulted in my arrest, whereupon a public protest was arranged in Carnegie Hall. It was an impressive gathering, with our friend and ardent co-worker Leonard D. Abbott presiding. He presented the historical aspects of the subject, while Doctors William J. Robinson and J. S. Goldwater spoke from the medical point of view. Dr. Robinson was an old champion of the cause; together with the venerable Abraham Jacobi, he was the pioneer of birth-control in the New York Academy of Medicine. Theodore Schroeder and Bolton Hall illuminated the legal side of family limitation, and Anna Strunsky Walling, John Reed, and a number of other speakers dwelt on its social and human value as a liberating factor, particularly in the lives of proletarians.

My trial, after several preliminary hearings, was set for April 20.... In court the next day, April 20, I pleaded my own case. The District Attorney interrupted me continually by taking exceptions, in which he was sustained by two of my three judges. Presiding Judge O'Keefe proved to be unexpectedly fair. After some tilts with the young prosecutor I took the stand in my own behalf. It gave me the opportunity to expose the ignorance of the detectives who testified against me and to deliver in open court a defence of birth-control.

I spoke for an hour, closing with the declaration that if it was a crime to work for healthy motherhood and happy child-life, I was proud to be considered a criminal. Judge O'Keefe, reluctantly I thought, pronounced me guilty and sentenced me to pay a fine of one hundred dollars or serve fifteen days in the workhouse. On principle I refused to pay the fine, stating that I preferred to go to jail. It called forth an approving demonstration, and the court attendants cleared the room. I was hurried off to the Tombs, whence I was taken to the Queens County Jail....

Our following Sunday meeting, which I could not attend, since my forum was now a cell, was turned into a protest against my conviction. Among the speakers was Ben, who announced that pamphlets containing information about contraceptives were on the literature table and could be taken free of charge. Before he had got off the platform, the last of the pamphlets had been snatched up. Ben was arrested on the spot and held for trial.

Little did the New York authorities foresee the results of the arrests of Ben and me. The Carnegie Hall meeting had awakened interest throughout the country in the idea of birth-control. Protests and public demands for the right to contraceptive information were reported from numerous cities. In San Francisco forty leading women signed a declaration to the effect that they would get out pamphlets and be ready to go to prison. Some proceeded to carry out the plan and they were arrested, but their cases were discharged by the judge, who stated that there was no ordinance in the city to prohibit the propagation of birth-control information.

The next Carnegie Hall meeting was held as a greeting upon my release. The occasion was under the auspices of prominent persons in New York, but the actual organization work was done by Ben and his "staff," as he called our active boys and girls. Birth-control had ceased to be a mere theoretic issue; it became an important phase of the social struggle, which could be advanced more by deeds than by words. Every speaker stressed this point. It was again Rose Pastor Stokes who carried wishes into action. She distributed leaflets on contraceptives from the platform of the famous hall....

Emma Goldman, Living My Life, vol. II (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1931), pp.552-554, 569-571.

"EUGENICS AND CHILD CULTURE"
BY G. HARDY

...The question is: Do we wish to constitute a robust, intelligent, beautiful and happy race?

If so, man who has hitherto been a mere wild animal from the sexual point of view must become, as a reproducer of his kind, a domestic animal. The multiplication of our species must, like all other enterprizes [sic], be submitted to examination and to reason; it must be subordinated to considerations of a physiological, moral and aesthetic nature, in order to transmit to succeeding generations only such characteristics as will render them less miserable and unfortunate than ours has been. Starting on the basis of eugenics, there are, it would seem, some special precautions to be taken, in order that humanity may in as many ways as possible, perfect itself.

First of all, the hordes of degenerate, diseased, idiotic, feeble-minded, alcoholic, and vicious criminals must be wiped out. Their sterilization commends itself the more, in that it will not occasion them the least discomfort. Very simple operations like vasectomy insure the painless suppression of any possible descendants of those physically or mentally unfit.

The reproduction of the sickly, and of those tainted with transmissible disease (syphilis, tuberculosis, etc.) must also be prevented. The most of these do not have or desire a numerous progeny, and persuasion will do as well or better, in their case, than constraint.

These two measures constitute what may be called repressive eugenics. They favor positive eugenics because thus only the healthy are privileged to found a family.

The fruits of healthy unions must not, however, be allowed to waste away....It is necessary to conform to the principles of child culture to keep them in a healthy state. There must be repose, sunshine, good nourishment, large, clean dwelling places for pregnant women, nursing mothers and young children. To insure the fullest perfection of the future citizen his development up to the period of adolescence must be safeguarded by a scientific pedagogy and a careful man-culture.

...To attain these ends and to dry up definitely the sources of degeneration and suffering, it is absolutely necessary to give to the proletariat the knowledge necessary to avoid having too numerous a family. It is indispensable that each family should be at liberty to have only as many children as it wants and is capable of feeding conveniently, rearing decently, and to whom it can give as prolonged and careful an education as possible.

Without a doubt, the widespread prudery and general hypocrisy, which is even more profound in regard to these questions than to any others, will tax these ideas with immortality.

Nevertheless, no measures will more surely and more speedily benefit the whole human race than those we have set forth here. No others will contribute more rapidly to progress, emancipation and happiness.

"Eugenics and Child Culture" from The Birth Control Review, Vol. III, No. 9 (September 1919) p. 18. [Translated from an article by G. Hardy, a French Neo-Malthusian, whose ideas were promoted in The Birth Control Review.]

BLANCHE SHRACK'S EDITORIAL COMMENT

The slums of our large northern cities are matched in vice and poverty in the Negro quarters of the southern cities. Certain streets of all these fair cities are lined with rows of closely built wooden shanties—sometimes row behind row—where colored people live. There are a few "apartment" houses; our cook says she lives in one of them. She doesn't seem quite sure of the number of rooms in the house, but she thinks there are twelve on the first floor, and twelve on the second floor. The families on the first floor have one room apiece; on the second, each family has two rooms. For light at night they have kerosene lamps, and on the back porch on each floor there is a hydrant which supplies all the families on that floor with water for cooking and washing. Most of the families in this particular house consist of couples, but one family on the second floor has three children.

This is typical of the crowding and lack of sanitation on which vice and disease invariably follow, and it is as bad for the white people of the city as for the colored ones who have to endure the first-hand wretchedness of it.

In Northern cities where the negro population is a comparatively small part of the world, it may not be apparent that the virility of the Negro man and the health of the Negro woman is just as important to the white population as the welfare of its own men and women. In the South this should be apparent, and would be, if the white people in the southern cities were not encouraged by training and tradition to thoughtless habits of blind indifference where their colored neighbors are concerned. Yet the needs of the two races bring them together constantly in a variety of intimate ways—colored women nurse white babies; there are colored cooks in most white families; and since laundries are practically unknown in the majority of white homes (even in as large a city as Atlanta) washing is called for on Monday morning by colored washerwomen, taken to their homes to be washed, and not returned until Saturday.

It ought thus be evident to the most casual observer that a child's life is endangered if its colored nurse is diseased; that people cannot long remain healthy whose clothes are washed and kept for days in dirty rooms.

We ought to be ashamed though, to have to resort to the argument of self-interest. The colored woman deserves to have health and cleanliness, a decent manner of living, for her own sake, but if we are really too indifferent to her welfare to help her better her condition, then at least such selfish considerations as our own well-being ought to goad us into doing something. But we do nothing; yet the facts are startling. Colored women and babies suffer and die as a result of our neglect: of 1,290 colored babies born in New Orleans in one year, 555 died before they were one year-old; in Charleston, S.C. in the same year, 758 colored babies were born, and 350 died under one year of age; Richmond's record for that year was 625 births, 331 deaths—in other words, of every two colored babies born, only one lives to be a year old.

This is not the record of an exceptional year picked out by an alarmist to point a moral. In all the large southern cities the colored deaths each year, in proportion to the population, greatly exceeded whites; and the record of still-births and infant mortality among colored people is alarming. In the city of Nashville for the period 1893-95, still and premature births for the white population were 272 and for the colored 385, the latter two and one third times as many, in proportion to the population as was to be expected. One writer tells us the diseases of inanition, infantile debility, and infantile marasmus of which so many babies die are "merely the names of symptoms due to enfeebled constitutions and congenital diseases inherited from parents suffering the effects of sexual immorality and debauchery."

Promiscuous sexual relationships and loose morals are an inevitable consequence of the herding of one or more families in homes of two and three rooms, whether in the south or in the north. Under such conditions the colored woman is desperately in need of the protection which a knowledge of Birth Control would give, both for her own sake and to prevent the spread of disease. Of what avail is it to keep this knowledge from her if, practically, out of every two children she bears, one dies before reaching the age of one year? Society gains nothing by this slaughter of innocents, and the colored mother, often without proper medical attention, without knowledge and power of voluntary motherhood, is ruined in health and usefulness by this wasteful childbearing.

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT Q

A knowledge of contraceptive methods would have an additional value as an incentive to personal cleanliness, but here the colored woman is caught in a vicious circle—she cannot have personal cleanliness without a certain measure of privacy; she cannot have privacy as long as the family continues to live in one room; and without practicing Birth Control, she cannot keep her family from growing beyond the limits of the quarters at its disposal.

Colored mothers are not more able to help themselves than are white women under similar circumstances. The obligation to aid them to make their lives decent and liveable lies therefore, directly with the white women of the country, and in particular with the southern white women because their opportunity is greater. So far, the white women of the South has too often given her colored neighbor the help that affords merely temporary relief. It has been but the generous impulse of the moment toward a particular colored woman who has earned the consideration by faithful service, rather than the intelligent will to work to give colored women as a whole the self-respect and cleanliness of mind and body which is their right. This can be done by teaching them Birth Control, but Birth Control can only help the colored woman, if to that knowledge is added the encouragement to a better mode of living which a clean and adequate home can give.

"Editorial Comment," by Blanche Schrack of Atlanta, Georgia. Excerpt from The Birth Control Review, Vol. III, No. 9 (September 1919) p. 3.

THE DEBATE OVER WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

A. Objectives

1. To examine African American women's involvement in the suffrage movement.

2. To investigate different viewpoints in the suffrage debate.

B. Lesson Activities

1. Divide the class into seven groups. Each group will read one of the seven documents that follow. One student in each group will present their document in the form of a speech, while another student will explain to the class why the document was chosen.

2. Have each document read to the class by a different student in a Reader's Theater format. The rest of the students should keep two-column learning logs as they listen. In the left column they should list the facts or information presented, in the right they should list their personal reactions or opinions.

3. Evaluation:

   Have students assume one of the following roles in 1910 society. According to their role have students explain which documents they found most convincing and why. Or, if in their role they found none of the documents persuasive, have them explain why. This activity can be done in either oral or written form.

a. White middle-class club woman
b. African American woman educator
c. White woman factory worker
d. White male businessman
e. African American male factory worker
f. White male farmer

MISS ANTHONY'S LAST BIRTHDAY LETTER TO MRS. STANTON, WRITTEN A FEW DAYS BEFORE HER SUDDEN DEATH

My Dear Mrs. Stanton :—

I shall indeed be happy to spend with you November 12, the day on which you round out your four-score and seven, over four years ahead of me, but in age as in all else I follow you closely. It is fifty-one years since we first met and we have been busy through every one of them, stirring up the world to recognize the rights of women. The older we grow the more keenly we feel the humiliation of disfranchisement and the more vividly we realize its disadvantages in every department of life and most of all in the labor market.

We little dreamed when we began this contest, optimistic with the hope and buoyancy of youth, that half a century later we would be compelled to leave the finish of the battle to another generation of women. But our hearts are filled with joy to know that they enter upon this task equipped with a college education, with business experience, with the full right to speak in public—all of which were denied to women fifty years ago. They have practically but one point to gain—the suffrage; we had all. These strong, courageous, capable young women will take our place and complete our work. There is an army of them where we were but a handful. Ancient prejudice has become so softened, public sentiment so liberalized and women have so thoroughly their ability as to leave not a shadow of doubt that they will carry our cause to victory.

And we, dear, old friend, shall move on to the next sphere of existence—higher and larger, we cannot fail to believe, and one where women will not be placed in an inferior position but will be welcomed on a plane of perfect and intellectual and spiritual equality.

Ever lovingly yours,
Susan B. Anthony

From Ida Husted Harper, ed., History of Woman Suffrage, vol. V, 1900-1920 (New York: Arno & New York Times, 1969), pp. 741-742

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT R-2

ADELLA HUNT LOGAN'S
"COLORED WOMEN AS VOTERS"

More and more colored women are studying public questions and civics. As they gain information and have experience in their daily vocations and in their efforts for human betterment they are convinced, as many other women have long ago been convinced, that their efforts would be more telling if women had the vote.

The fashion of saying "I do not care to muddle with politics" is disappearing among the colored woman faster than most people think, for this same woman has learned that politics meddle constantly with her and hers.

A number of colored women are active members of the National Woman Suffrage Association. They are well informed and are diligent in the spread of propaganda. Women who see that they need the vote see also that the vote needs them. Colored women feel keenly that they may help in civic betterment, and that their broadened interests in matters of good government may arouse the colored brother, who for various reasons has become too indifferent to his duties of citizenship.

The suffrage map shows that six States have equal political rights for women and men, and that a much larger number have granted partial suffrage to women. In all these the colored woman is taking part, not as fully as she will when the question is less of an experiment, not as heartily as she will when her horizon broadens, but she bears her part.

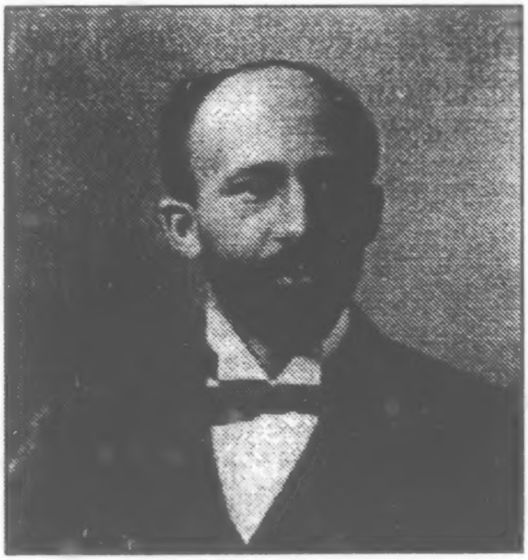
This much, however, is true now: the colored American believes in equal justice to all, regardless of race, color, creed or sex, and longs for the day when the United States shall indeed have a government of the people, for the people, and by the people—even including the colored people.

The Crisis, Vol. 4, No. 5 (Sept. 1912), pp.242-243

W.E.B. DU BOIS DISCUSSES WOMAN SUFFRAGE

In the fall of 1915 the colored voters of Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania are going to be asked for their opinion on the enfranchisement of women. There were in 1910, 151,341 Negro voters in these states. The number is probably near 200,000 today. It is safe to say that in an electorate of over 5,000,000 these 200,000 votes may easily hold a balance of power and certainly would be a valuable asset. Undoubtedly among negro voters there is a good deal of indifference and lack of knowledge concerning woman suffrage. We tend to oppose the principle because we do not like the reactionary attitude of most white women toward our problems. We must remember, however, that we are facing a great question of right in which personal hatreds have no place. Every argument for Negro suffrage is an argument for woman's suffrage; every argument for woman suffrage is an argument for Negro suffrage; both are great movements in democracy. There should be on the part of Negroes absolutely no hesitation whenever and wherever responsible human beings are without voice in their government. The man of Negro blood who hesitates to do them justice is false to his race, his ideals and his country.

W.E.B. Du Bois, "Woman Suffrage," The Crisis, April, 1915



W.E.B. DuBois

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"A LABOR ORGANIZER SPEAKS OUT FOR SUFFRAGE BEFORE JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS"

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee: Yes; I have outdone the lady who went to work at 18 by five years. I have been a wage earner since I was a little over 13. I, too, know whereof I speak; that it is the reason I do not want to play a bluff game with you any longer. You can not or will not make laws for us; we must make laws for ourselves. We working women need the ballot for self-protection; that is all there is to it. We have got to have it.

We work long, long hours and we do not get half enough to live on. We have got to keep decent, and if we go "the easy way" you men make the laws that will let you go free and send us into the gutter. [Applause.]

We can not believe in man-made laws any longer. We have gone from one assembly to another, from one State senator to another, and we have heard the same old story. You think only of output; there is not a soul among you who cares to save human beings. We have grown rich, as a nation, but we have grown very rotten. As a people—gentlemen, I use the term "rotten" advisedly—for, as far as the working women are concerned, the foundation we are building on is rotten. To purify the life of the Nation we women know we have got to do our part, political as well as industrial duty. Government, as a whole, rests on industry. You men say to us: "Go back to the home. Your place is in the home," yet as children we must come out of the home at 11, at 13, and at 15 years of age to earn a living; we have got to make good or starve.

"Pay your way" we are taught in school and in church—the greatest thing on earth is to be able to pay your own way. Well, if any people on earth pay their way in life working women do. The return we get is that most of us become physical wrecks along the roadside of life. When you gentlemen hear what it costs a working woman to "pay her way" in life, you sit back in your chairs, say "the story is terrible, but they manage to live somehow." Somehow—that is it, gentlemen. I want to make you realize the *somehow* of life to the hundreds of girls I have seen go down in the struggle. You men do not care. You want this country to get rich, and you do not know the only riches of a nation are its people. [Applause.]

We have gone before legislature after legislature making our pleas for justice. We have seen the game as you play it. What is it? We go there and we are told the same old tommyrot—let men do this for you. I tell you as a bit of business experience if you let anybody do a thing for you they will do you. That is business. [Applause.]

Now, while we have had the colleges opened to women, only one woman in a thousand goes to college, while modern industry claims one woman in every five to-day. It is industrial methods which are teaching the women the facts I am telling you. "Do the other fellow before he gets a chance to do you"—do him so hard that he can not stand up again; that is good business. We know that, and we woman are sure that there must be some higher standard for life than business,

We are not getting a square deal; we go before legislature after legislature to tell our story, but they fail to help the women who are being speeded so high in the mills and in factories, from 54 hours to 72 hours in stores in New York, and 92 hours in one week in subcellar laundries. Who cares? Nobody! Nobody does; nobody cares about making laws so long as we get cheap and nasty things in the market. Working women come before you and tell you things and think you will do something for them. Every man listening is convinced that the girls are telling the truth. It is only when you think of them as your own girls that you have the right to make laws for them. Every man listening wants to do the fair thing, but just as soon as our backs are turned, up comes the representative of the big interest and says, "Lad, you are dead politically if you do what those women ask" They know it is true, and we get nothing, because all the votes are owned.

Every vote you cast is owned, and it is the owned vote which has fought our women. Go before your legislatures as you will, the only argument that you can bring in to the man in politics—he is there to go up the ladder, decently if he can, but he will go up anyhow, if he can—the only argument that you can bring to that man is the power of the ballot. When we can say to him, "Man, do this and we will return you so many million votes," he will listen and act.

This is what we want, because it is for the good of the women, because it is for the good of the whole people. It is for that reason that the working woman, facing the hard facts of life and having to fight her way, has come to the conclusion that you men in politics—I am not going to give you any taffy—you men in politics are not leaders, you follow what you think is the next step on the ladder. We want you to understand that the next step in politics, the next step in democracy, is to give to the women of your Nation a ballot. [Applause.]

The working women send me to you with the plain, honest truth; because, working beside you in the same mill or factory, we know you with your evening suit off and your tall hat in the box, or wherever it belongs; you are just a competitor with us there; we tell you the truth here, as I have come to tell you the truth here. Let women have the ballot, in order that you may once more throw the burden which you have carried, or thought you carried, onto them; that is the thing you have done since the beginning of time; when the load was too heavy for you piled it onto Eve's back. [Applause.] You have got us in a devil of a mess, economic and political. It is so rank it smells to Heaven; but we will come in and help you clean house. We will start all over again, because we belong together shoulder to shoulder. We must get on to a better time. It is only because you will not, in your prejudice and your ignorance, let us into the political field with you that the situation is as bad as it is to-day.

We working women want the ballot, not as a privilege but as a right. You say you have only given the ballot as an expediency; you have never given it as a right; then we demand it as an expediency for the 8,000,000 working women. All other women ought to have it, but we working women must have it. [Applause.]

Source: Statement of Leonora O'Reilly (1912) before joint Congressional Session of Congress, found in Anne F. Scott and Andres Scott, One Half the People (Philadelphia: J.P. Lippincott, 1975), pp.126-27

"FRONT DOOR LOBBYING" FOR SUFFRAGE

"SUFFRAGE ACTIVISTS LOBBY CONGRESS MEMBERS"

During January, 1917, in addition to members of the Congressional Committee, there were twenty-nine women from sixteen different states, who stayed in Washington at their own expense for periods ranging from six days to four weeks...

Many of our lobby meetings were as entertaining as a good comedy. One of the women had the gift of ironic wit. Another was a capital mimic and gave us side-splitting imitations of some of the men whom she had interviewed. She was wise, too, for she cautioned us never to tell outside that any of our number had ventured to "take off" members of Congress. I sometimes found it hard to stop my own laughter long enough to give the next assignments.

Some of the written reports were funny, too. For example, this was turned in by one of our southern lobbyists after she interviewed a Texas member:

> Polite but positive. Against woman suffrage—any phase of it. Declares that men represent women. When I suggested my being a widow and not having representation, he gallantly offered to represent me. The fact of his living in Texas and my residence being in Kentucky did not dismay him at all, but the proposition was most unsatisfactory to me. Against prohibition and against child labor bill. Has not seen any light at all in progressive legislation.

Another southern interview went into our record in these words:

> Invited us in—polite manner. Believes that woman dwells apart from man—in her nature. "She is different—Nature made it so—all history, science and biology prove it! Look at the barnyard, the 'cockerel' protects the hen, etc. Woman is meant for the home, the hearth and to be sheltered by man." He acknowledged that there were some women outside the home, but men could protect them. The dirty mire of politics for women could not be thought of. He deplored the lack of woman's trust in men, and did not think women wanted to be called "suffragands" (the correlation of the word "brigand"). He is beyond the pale. We parted in a friendly way.

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT R-5

The shortest and most satisfactory report that I remember was of an interview with Hon. Fiorello La Guardia:

He said, "I'm with you; I'm for it, I'm going to vote for it. Now don't bother me," all in one breath.

From Front Door Lobby by Maud Wood Park. Copyright ©1960 by Edna Lamprey Stantial. Reprinted by permission of Beacon Press, pp.38-41.

WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR HERMAN BILGRIEN EXPLAINS HIS POSITION AGAINST THE NINETEENTH AMENDMENT

Why I Voted against Women Suff

I and my wife agree on point I, a hous Wife belongs to home near her children and to keep hous, and not in open public Politic.

2ond. it is only for the city Women in larger Cities that want to vote and to get the controll of the Country vote. to Elect State officers and President of the U.S. because a Country Women wont not go to Vote they have all they wont to do to take care of their children and House Work garden and etc.

3th a Danger that the men will not go to the poles if the Women get Elected to any State Legislature. the big Danger will be that some hair pulling will going on if there will be Women Elected in the State Legislature they will be worse as the Attorneys at present.

Wisconsin State Senator's Handwritten Explanation of his vote against ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment reprinted in Carrie Chapman Catt and Nettie Rogers Shuler, Woman Suffrage and Politics: The Inner Story of the Suffrage Movement (New York: Charles Scribner's sons, 1923).

CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT CELEBRATES SUFFRAGE VICTORY

The vote is the emblem of your equality, women of America, the guarantee of your liberty. That vote of yours has cost millions of dollars and the lives of thousands of women. Money to carry on this work has been given usually as a sacrifice, and thousands of women have gone without things they wanted and could have had in order that they might help get the vote for you. Women have suffered agony of soul which you can never comprehend, that you and your daughters might inherit political freedom. *That vote has been costly. Prize it!*

The vote is a power, a weapon of offense and defense, a prayer. Understand what it means and what it can do for your country. Use it intelligently, conscientiously, prayerfully. No soldier in the great suffrage army has labored and suffered to get a "place" for you. Their motive has been the hope that women would aim higher than their own selfish ambitions, that they would serve the common good.

The vote is won. Seventy-two years the battle for this privilege has been waged, but human affairs with their eternal change move on without pause. Progress is calling to you to make no pause. Act!

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

Valuable studies of women's organizational efforts for social reform during the Progressive era include Karen J. Blair's The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914 (1980) and Allen Davis's Spearheads for Reform: The Social Settlements and the Progressive Movement, 1890-1914 (1967). Linda Gordon provides a thorough examination of the birth control movement in Woman's Body, Women's Right: A Social History of Birth Control in America (1976). The history of working women is treated in several excellent works such as Nancy Schrom Dye's As Equals and as Sisters: Feminism, The Labor Movement, and the Women's Trade's Trade Union League of New York (1981); Jacqueline Jones's Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work, and the Family from Slavery to the Present (1985); and Meredith Tax's The Rising of Women: Feminist Solidarity and Class Conflict, 1880-1917 (1981). Ellen Condliffe Lagemann's A Generation of Women: Education in the Lives of Progressive Reformers (1979) and Roberta Frankfort's Collegiate Women: Domesticity and Career in Turn-of-the-Century America (1977) examine women's educational opportunities and achievements during the Progressive era. Important treatments of the women's suffrage movement include Nancy F. Cott's The Groundings of Modern Feminism (1987); Eleanor Flexner's Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement (revised edit., 1975); Aileen Kraditor's The Ideas of the Women's Suffrage Movement (1965); and Anne Firor Scott and Andrew McCay Scott's One Half the People: The Fight for Women's Suffrage (1975).

Students and teachers interested in examining women's history through primary sources in other eras can consult Major Problems in American Women's History: Documents and Essays (1989), edited by Mary Beth Norton; Modern American Women: A Documentary History (1989), edited by Susan Ware; and Black Women in White America: A Documentary History (1972), Edited by Gerda Lerner.